

# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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The Christian P. Steiner Family, Bluffton, Ohio, around 1900. Standing, left to right: Sarah, Albert J., Josiah S., Reuben S., Nancy, Elvina, Jennie. Seated left to right: Paulina, Christian, his wife Barbara, Menno S.

## Christian P. Steiner

Christian P. Steiner was born near Sterling, O., and died at Bluffton, O., July 28, 1910; aged 77 y. 11 m. 9 d. He was the third in a family of eleven children of whom five—Daniel, Mary Eby, Catharine Amstutz, Elizabeth Thut and Job—have gone before, and John of Wayne Co., Anna Geiger, Barbara Bowman, Peter D., and Sem of this place, survive him.

In 1855 he came to this community and bought a place near Rockport, which he cleared and improved by much hard labor, as was the custom in pioneer days. He was married to Magdalena Blosser of near Pendleton, now Pandora, Nov. 3, 1857, who died Feb. 18, ?, leaving him one son, Noah, who also died Sept. 7, 1859.

He was married the second time to Barbara, daughter of Bishop John Thut of near Shannon, now Bluffton, April 6, 1862, and to this union were born Paulina Bixel, Menno S., Jennie Betzner, Nancy Geiger, Josiah S., Sarah Geiger, Aaron, deceased, Albert J., Reuben S., and Elvina, who, with 27 grandchildren, survive him, one grandchild, Roy Bixel, having been called home.

He was converted and received into the Swiss Mennonite Church, in 1850, and called and ordained to the ministry by the American Mennonite Church of Bluffton, Feb. 27, 1869. His father, Peter D. Steiner, had been a minister and bishop for a number of years, and for four generations before him there had been

a minister of the Gospel in the Steiner family, dating back to the times of the beginning of the Mennonite churches in Switzerland.

As a minister he seemed more inclined to do personal work than to sermonize. His themes were usually selected from those passages of scripture that encouraged love, peace, unity and the prosperity of God's people. He had been crippled when a young man and needed the use of braces or a cane in getting about his work. He had never been compensated for pastoral duties. He neither asked nor expected such reward, yet these demands upon his life coupled with the cares and responsibilities of bringing up a large family go to show the devotion and self-sacrifice so necessary in a life like his. When the difficulties of a local nature, in the eighties, resulted

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## CHRISTIAN P. STEINER

(Continued from Page 1)

in the division of the congregation and left him in charge of a little band of some twenty members, he was not dismayed but looked forward for better days. He was not disappointed. In later years friendship and a brotherly interest between the congregations was again restored which has continued to this day.

When he saw that his life with us was drawing to a close he began to arrange for his burial and to set things in order for the change that would take place. He called for all his children to meet him two weeks ago (July 14) that he might give them his last instructions and admonitions with a fatherly benediction and good wishes. (See another page for his message.) His interest in the welfare of the Church and his family and children's children continued to the end. On Sunday, July 24, Bishop John Blosser was called to see him. He counseled with him on the merits of James 5:13-16 and being assured that the promise was intended for all who believed, if they desired to keep the ordinance, he said, "I can die in peace without being anointed; but since you are here I would feel a little better if I would observe these instructions also." His son, M. S., and the children, with the deacon, Fred Geiger, were then called to meet in the afternoon, when the ordinance was observed. When all had been arranged for he said, "I have now everything in order, and am only waiting for the Lord to call me to come into His rest. I have no fears. I can die happy."

He bore all his pains and suffering without murmurings or complaint. His last words were, "I want to go Home." This request was granted him twelve hours later. Today the family and friends and Zion mourns the loss of one who has been of great blessing to them, and whose life of sacrifice for the good of others shall be greatly missed.

Funeral services were preached in the English and German from the text of his choice (John 14:1-3) by Paul Whitmer and Eli Frey, assisted by D. S. Brunk, David Plank and J. M. Shenk.

(*Gospel Herald*, August 11, 1910,  
page 303)

## Bethel Church of God, Wayne County Ohio, 1833-1893

"The history of the Church of God at Cedar Valley from 1833 to 1893 the church was organized two miles west of Cedar Valley and one mile east of the eighth square by Thomas Hickernell the year of 1833 the members came from the Monroe [Mennonite] Church. I will give you a few of their names. John Funk, Henry Funk and their family, Peter Shurich [Sherrick], Henry Shurich and family, Isaac George and wife. They held meetings in the old log house. I have forgotten the time the house needed repairs. The majority of the members then were living around the Valley. They purchased a log house called the Gospel Shop. It stood across the road from where Mike Wagner lived. The road comes down over the hill from Christies the seats being made of slabs with legs, but without back to them. Quite a number joined the church. They are as follows; Lehrs, Warners, Meyers, Berrys, and Waltons. They held meetings in the Gospel shop until the year of 1855. The house became too small and out of repair. They remodeled the old log House where the church was organized. Down to the lower end of Cedar Valley now called Overton. They rebuilt it, sided and sealed the House. The building committee of Ed Lehr, Peter Warner, and David Meyers.

The House was dedicated by G. U. Horn in the year of 1855. They held services in the house nineteen years. In the year of 1872 they purchased nearly two acres of ground one half mile east of the church and Killbuck Hill. It was plotted for a cemetery. The first being buried there were two children of Abraham Thorn and J. C. Warner in the year of 1874. They built Bethel Church which still stands for the amount of thirteen hundred dollars. The framing lumber all being donated except the long piece at the top of the building.

The building committee composed of J. A. Randebaugh, Peter Warner, and J. C. Warner. It was dedicated by A. Shumacher of Chicago in the year of 1879. The belfry was built to the church and a bell purchased. The building committee composed of Henry Warner, J. C. Warner and Aran Maurer. It was dedicated by J. W. Updike in the year of 1890. The church purchased the ground that joins the Bethel Church on the east for a grove. The year of 1893

they undersigned move away. They have made some changes. I hope some one will begin where I left off and give a History of the Church till the present time."

Yours Respectable,

J. C. Warner  
Lodi, Ohio

## FOOTNOTES

The above history was copied from an early record book by the wife of the minister of the Church of God at Overton in Chester Township, Wayne County, Ohio, Harold W. Meador, R. D. 1, Burbank, Ohio, and sent to Wilmer Swope in answer to a request for historical data.

The "eighth square" was a brick school house built in an octagon shape which was used for school and township purposes, and served School District No. 6 of Chester Township between the years 1845-1858. This building was located on the present grounds of the Chester (Wisler) Mennonite Church until torn down in 1883. Cedar Valley was the name of a hamlet consisting of a store and a few houses situated on the bank of a stream called Cedar Run. The hamlet passed into oblivion and a new town sprung up one half mile east in Killbuck Valley called Overton, named after John Overholts of Wooster who built a grain elevator, the first building there. (Data on Eighth Square and Cedar Valley taken from Shaum-Holdeman Family History—Rutt 1930).

John Funk was an ordained Mennonite minister from East Huntington Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, who settled in Chester Township, Wayne County, Ohio, in section 23 in the year 1827. John Funk preached for the Mennonite settlers in a log house which he erected on his own farm at Chester Corners. By 1829 some of the members accused Funk of preaching too much like a Methodist, whereupon a number of families withdrew. The group which withdrew was organized as a congregation about 1830 with John Shaum being ordained as minister that year. Funk continued preaching as a Mennonite minister until the late fall of 1833. On October 7, 1833, the probate Court of Wayne County granted John Funk a license to solemnize marriages as long as he maintained his standing in said Mennonite Church. John Winebrenner and his two missionaries Jacob Keller and Thomas Hickernell held meetings in Funk's church on Funk's invitation. Together they organized a Church of God, with Funk and his members joining. John Funk was ordained an Elder in the Church of God. In 1841 John Funk deeded the log house to the Church of God. The site is deeded to John Funk, Daniel George and Joseph Sherrick, elders, and Peter Sherrick and Joseph C. Sherrick, deacons of the Church of God. (Wayne Co. Deed Records Vol. 23, page 617). There are no marks left to show where the Funk Church stood. The township trustees refused to fence and keep the burying ground cleaned. Since about 1900 no trace can be seen where the cemetery had been. (Funk Family History and Holdeman Family History.)

—Footnotes by Wilmer D. Swope

## Warren G. Bean, 1866-1949

JAMES HALTEMAN

When, and from what section of Europe, Warren Bean's ancestors emigrated to the New World is uncertain. It is generally thought, however, that near the end of the seventeenth century they came to America in search of freedom from the economic and religious restrictions which were prevalent at the time in Europe. Six generations later, William Johnson Bean and his wife, Mary, took up residence on a farm along the Skippack Creek, southwest of Creamery, Pennsylvania. Here on February 7, 1866, Warren was born, the third of four living children.

His early childhood was much like that of the average farm child of his day. As most of the young boys then, his childhood ambition was to be a farmer. At the age of seven, he began attending Roberts School, a small country schoolhouse in Worcester Township. He did very well and soon developed a strong desire to study and learn. This had been a latent interest up to this time, but before long he enjoyed studying more than farming. Then the hand of providence in the form of circumstances remolded his future outlook.

One day, at the age of nine, while driving cows to the pasture, he stepped on a large thorn which went into his foot, pierced the ankle joint, and broke off. Doctors seemed unable to do very much to help, and so he became crippled; and even with the help of braces it was very difficult for him to do his daily chores. Because of this injury, his physical activity was limited, and so he spent much of his time in his father's woodworking shop where he learned much about practical carpentry. This developed into a lifelong hobby which became especially satisfying to him in his later years.

At that time, after the completion of elementary school, one was considered sufficiently educated to engage in any normal occupation, but for Warren all available work was impossible because of his foot injury. These conditions plus his ability and desire to learn seemed to point to one thing; namely, more education. This he received in the spring terms of 1885 and 1886 at Bomberger Hall,<sup>1</sup> a college in Collegeville, Pennsylvania. At the close of the last term he received his Provisional Teachers Certificate which made him a qualified school teacher. It was also in 1885 that a doctor was able to extract the thorn from his foot, and so by the time he was ready to teach he could walk almost as well as normal. But Mr. Bean never taught school. The only teach-

ing opportunity which came his way in 1887 was undesirable and inconvenient, and so for the following two years he spent his time working for a local surveyor and for his father on the farm. The fact that he never taught school has been lamented by some, because he probably could have been a very successful teacher. Once again, however, the hand of God may have had more influence on the situation than we realize, for if he had taken teaching as his life's work he could never have contributed to the church all that he did during his lifetime.

But the year of 1887 was far from being a complete disappointment. On the fourth of June, he was married to Anna Kulp, and a short while later both he and his wife were baptized in the Skippack Creek as members of the Skippack Mennonite Church.<sup>2</sup> During the next twenty years six children were born to Warren and Anna—two boys, William and Warren, Jr., and four girls, Elizabeth, Sara, Mary, and Martha.

Two years after his marriage, he took over his father's farm and for almost ten years, farming was his full time work. It was during this period that Sunday schools were being started in various Mennonite Churches. Being a new innovation, it met serious opposition, particularly from the older folks who resented the use of the English language in a church service. However, Brother Bean believed the Sunday school would be an excellent opportunity to reach the young people in the language they knew best, and so he worked hard and was instrumental in finally getting it started in his home congregation at Skippack in 1897.

In June of this same year, the need arose for another minister to help in the work at the Worcester, Providence, and Skippack congregations. These churches were arranged into a circuit group so that the ministering brethren served in different congregations from week to week. The lot method was used, and both Warren and his father were among those chosen to participate in the ordination which took place June 15, 1897. It was Warren who was ordained that day as the new minister, but he immediately met opposition from another preacher who opposed an English minister, and so to keep peace in the church Brother Bean did not assume ministerial responsibilities until the offended person died, a year later. Then his real task began. Because he was the only English minister of the area, he was asked to participate

in many services of other denominations as well as in Mennonite churches outside of his district. In all his work, his main concern was that he would be true to the Word of God and his office in the church. In spite of his sincere devotion to his work, the church did not grow. In such situations it is usually the ministers who get the blame and this was no exception. However, a look at the underlying causes of this slack proves that much of the criticism was unfounded. To begin with, it was a period of transition. The starting of a Sunday school and the switch to the English language were both controversial issues which caused dissension. To make matters worse, the only bishop of the district died in 1898 and for the next ten years there was no bishop. Under such conditions it is a wonder that the district did not lose more members than it did.

In November 1909, Brother Bean was ordained to fill the vacant office of bishop of the Skippack district, which then consisted of six congregations but was later expanded to eight. During the next thirty years of full time church work he missed only one service, an incredible feat considering the magnitude of the work. He officiated in all of the communion services of his congregations and many of the baptismal ceremonies, plus averaging a funeral service every three weeks. Through the years, he became known for his dependability and punctuality. Being at church on time became part of his everyday code, regardless of the distance to travel or the severity of the weather. This is a small example of the determination and perseverance which typified his character and made his work so successful. As senior bishop of the area he was Moderator of the Franconia Conference during its period of greatest growth and enlightenment.

One other area of his work, which is of great importance, is the writing which he did in his diaries and church record books. Detailed accounts of special services as well as statistics on baptisms, marriages and funerals are helpful in understanding this period in our church's history. He is also responsible for many of the writings in the *Alms Book*.<sup>3</sup>

After thirty-five years of this strenuous work, he requested help and so Amos Kolb was ordained in 1944 to assist him.

A few months later, on November 9, he was deeply grieved by the passing of his wife, Anna. For fifty-seven years she had in her quiet way influenced his life and work immeasurably and so he felt the loss

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## WARREN G. BEAN

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keenly. Within two weeks after her death, his hearing nerves were so greatly affected by the shock that he became almost totally deaf. This greatly hindered his activity in the church, but not his fellowship with God nor his desire to learn. During the last few years of his life much of his time was spent studying at his desk with his books, a task that gave him great satisfaction.

Except for his hearing, Brother Bean was in good physical condition for a man his age. He never had false teeth, and he needed glasses only for detailed work, and so he continued to preach up until about a week before his death in 1949. The theme of his last sermon was "Hear Ye Him," taken from the Transfiguration of Christ as told in Matthew seventeen. Shortly after this service, he became sick and several days later (on September 21) he died in the presence of Mary and Elizabeth, two of his daughters. There was no struggle or pain, just a few gasping breaths and then silence. Brother Bean's work on earth was finished, and he had left to receive his reward. Funeral services were held at the Skippack Mennonite Church with Jacob C. Clemens officiating. Warren Bean left no great fortune, but he did leave an influence which is beyond price.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Bomberger Hall was named after the man who financed the original building of the College. Today the college has been named Ursinus College.

<sup>2</sup> Ellrose D. Zook, *Mennonite Yearbook*, (Pennsylvania, Mennonite Publishing House, 1950), p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> The Alma Book is an old church record book and is kept by Eugene Kerr in Telford, Pennsylvania.

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3. Guntz, Elizabeth, interviewed by James Halteman, Royersford, Pa., December 10, 1961.
4. Halteman, Perle, interviewed by James Halteman, Harleysville, Pa., January 15, 1962.
5. Zook, Ellrose D., *Mennonite Yearbook*, (Pennsylvania, Mennonite Publishing House, 1950), pp. 22-24.

Harleysville, Pa.

The following reprints of articles in the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* are available: Russia, Germany, Historiography, Genealogy, West Prussia, Relief Work, Hymnology, and Old Colony Mennonites. They may be ordered for 25 cents each from Melvin Gingerich, Historical and Research Committee, Goshen, Indiana.

## John Funk (1788-1862)

WILMER D. SWOPE

John Funk was a Mennonite minister who with a number of Mennonite families in Chester Township, Wayne County, Ohio, in the fall of 1833 joined The Church of God (Winebrenner).

He was born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, on January 30, 1788. His father was David Funk (1765-1833), a farmer and distiller who was converted and joined the Mennonite Church. In 1798-1799 David Funk moved his family to Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, where he was ordained a minister and later bishop.<sup>1</sup> John Funk was ordained to the ministry in Westmoreland County.<sup>2</sup> On April 10, 1827, John Funk left East Huntingdon Township, Westmoreland County, and ten days later arrived in Chester Township, Wayne County, Ohio.<sup>3</sup> Funk bought land in section 23 of Chester Township. A great ravine whose hillsides are covered with evergreen trees and wintergreen tea cuts its way through section 23 and is known today as Funk's Hollow.

Funk erected a log church building on his farm in which he preached for the Mennonite settlers for several years. About 1829 a contention arose in the church with some of the members complaining that Funk preached too much like the Methodists.<sup>4</sup> The dissatisfied members withdrew and organized a Mennonite congregation in section 16 of Chester Township. The first minister ordained for this group was John Shaum, in the year 1830.<sup>5</sup> Funk continued to preach as a Mennonite minister for his group until the late fall of 1833, when John Winebrenner and his two missionaries Jacob Keller and Thomas Hickernell came into Wayne County. Funk invited them to preach in his church. They complied and held protracted meetings, gaining a number of converts. Winebrenner and his co-workers then organized a local Church of God with Funk and his group joining.<sup>6</sup> John Funk was ordained an elder and continued preaching at Chester Crossroads and other church-ees. In 1841 Funk and his wife Maria deeded 3/4 of an acre containing his log church building to The Church of God. In 1849 he moved to Wooster, Ohio, where he died April 2, 1862, and was buried in the Wooster cemetery.

The John Holdeman schism, which took place in 1859 in the Mennonite Church, was organized by a few members of Funk's group who complained that he preached like a Methodist. John Holdeman was converted in 1844 likely as the result of attendance at

Funk's church, possibly during special meetings. Funk's church was one mile east of the Chester or Eight Square Mennonite Church where John Holdeman's father Amos was deacon.<sup>7</sup> It is said of Amos Holdeman that he was a school teacher, much interested in sacred and church history. There is no doubt but that the evangelistic zeal of the neighboring Church of God fired the convictions of young Holdeman and is explanatory of his disappointment when he failed to receive a call to the ministry in the Old Mennonite Church. Probably the knowledge which young John Holdeman had of the history of the Mennonite Church through the efforts of his father kept young Holdeman from simply leaving the church of his fathers and joining Funk's Church of God congregation. Holdeman adopted the term Church of God from Funk's group, but added "in Christ Mennonite," so that today the Holdeman Church is known as The Church of God in Christ, Mennonite. The Methodistic style of evangelism through the work of John Winebrenner therefore has left a definite mark on one branch of the Mennonite Church, namely The Church of God in Christ, Mennonite.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> See "Brief History of Henry Funk," page 28. The date of David Funk's arrival in Westmoreland County is indicated by a grandfather's clock ordered by David Funk from the master clockmaker George Hoff of Lancaster, Pa., during or just preceding his trip west. The clock bears the date 1798 or 1799 on the dial. This clock is owned by Daniel Funk of Wooster, Ohio.

<sup>2</sup> *Mennonite Encyclopedia Dictionary*, by Daniel Kauffman, page 117; see article "Funk David." See footnote 6 also.

<sup>3</sup> John Funk Journal in possession of Daniel C. Funk, Wooster, Ohio.

<sup>4</sup> *Mennonites of Westmoreland County*, by E. Yoder; see footnote p. 24.

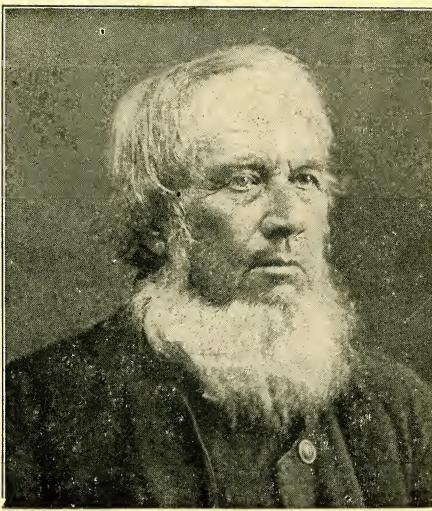
<sup>5</sup> *Mennonite Encyclopedia Dictionary*, page 337; see John Shaum.

<sup>6</sup> Wayne County Ohio Common Pleas Court Records. Courtesy of Daniel C. Funk, Wooster, Ohio. "October 7, 1833, Ordered by the Court that license be issued to John Funk a minister of the Menonist Church or Society in said Wayne County Ohio who is hereby authorized to Solemnize marriages within the state of Ohio, so long as he maintains his present standing of a minister of said Church or Society." Funk's joining the Church of God group certainly came after October 7, 1833. In the Church of God in North American (General Eldership) "each local church is a Church of God and should be so called." Winebrenner Group.

<sup>7</sup> *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Volume II, page 789, see article John Holdeman.

Leetonia, Ohio

The Proceedings of the Seventh Mennonite World Conference, held in Kitchener, Ontario, in August 1962, are being printed and may be ordered from C. J. Dyck, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana.



MR. AND MRS. JOSEPH SOMMER

Joseph Sommer was living in Marion Township, Washington County, Iowa, by 1854, and possibly earlier. He was born in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, possibly in 1806, and was married to Elizabeth Miller. He was a member of the Amish church of Washington County, Iowa. In 1860 his four children, all born in Ohio, were aged respectively 18, 16, 14, and 7.

Mrs. Joseph Sommer, nee Elizabeth Miller, came originally from Holmes County, Ohio, and lived with her husband in Washington County, Iowa. They migrated to Iowa with at least four children in 1853 or 1854. The pictures illustrate the Amish costume of the last half of the nineteenth century.

## The Horning Family

"I am a great-great-grandson of Johann Anton and Catharina Margareta (born Neuroth) Hornung, who in 1830 emigrated from Spachbrucken-bei-Reinheim, Germany, to Pennsylvania. One of their sons, Johann Jakob, was the grandfather of my mother, Mrs. Maud Burley (born Horning), who now lives in College Springs, Page County, Iowa.

In January, 1955, I went to Ethiopia to work as editor for the Imperial Ethiopian College of Agriculture. Passengers on the plane from Cairo to Addis Ababa included a Herr Walther May, a young manufacturer of furniture in Cologne, Germany, who was going to Ethiopia to negotiate with His Imperial Majesty, Emperor Haile Selassie I, for sale of furniture to the Imperial Ethiopian Government. During the five months before my family came, I lived in the Ras Hotel and became well acquainted with Herr May.

When he left Ethiopia for Germany, I gave him a note which contained the only information I had concerning my great-grandfather, which was that he was born on February 16, 1821, at "Spadebrin, New Hesson, Darmstadt, Germany," that his parents were Anthony and Catherine Margaretha (born Hee), and that he was the seventh child and third son of this marriage.

Herr May returned to Ethiopia about six months later. The letters in the German language indicate that an employee of his corresponded first with the mayor of Darmstadt and subsequently with a Herr Walther Moller, a genealogist, of Darmstadt. Herr Moller quickly came to the conclusion that there was no village of "Spadebrin." Apparently he consulted the church records of Spachbrucken, 13 kilometers from Darmstadt, as a "shot in the dark," and this met with immediate success. Herr May brought to Ethiopia copies of the records and the correspondence involved in the search.

When my family and I returned to the United States in July-August, 1957, we rented a car at Munich and drove to Spachbrucken while enroute to Wiesbaden. We came first to the cemetery, and here, within five minutes, we found stones with the family name "Hornung." Subsequently, we met the pastor of the nearby church, and his wife, and through him we met several members of the Hornung family, descendants of a brother of my great-great-grandfather. We visited the church and two of the Hornung homes.

We learned that in Spachbrucken were other families named Hornung, but so far as known they were no relation. The name is encountered

occasionally in Germany; when we stayed in a gasthaus near Heidelberg the host was named Hornung.

I learned that we were the first of the Horning descendants to come back to Spachbrucken in 127 years.

Since returning to Stillwater, I have corresponded with a Mrs. Ingeborg Krell, of Gross Biebau, whose grandmother was a Hornung. She has sent me a record of the Hornungs who remained in Germany, also pictures of the village and of the Hornung home that I understand was my great-grandfather's birthplace.

Conrad Hornung, born May 21, 1881, was one of those whom we visited. His farmhouse and buildings are in a courtyard in the center of the village. He is the last of the Hornung family name living in Spachbrucken. He has no children, and with his death the name will disappear except for those families that so far as known are not related. However, there are Hornung descendants of the names Illert, Krell, Golz, and Bergoint in the village, or nearby.

While in Spachbrucken, we told the Hornungs that in the Horning family in the United States, or at least in those of Page County, the large "Horning nose" was a source of amusement for the family. They

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## Anna Horning, 1826-1897

"Anna Horning, the widow of Jacob Horning, furnishes us with a remarkable example of what can be accomplished by a hard-working, practical woman. Jacob Horning was born in Hesse-Darmstadt, Germany, February 16, 1821, and is a son of Anthony and Katherine Margarethe Horning. His father emigrated to America in 1830, and settled in Chambersburgh, Pennsylvania. He was a man of some property, and was greatly respected by all who knew him.

Jacob Horning during his childhood had a desire to become a farmer, and at the age of twelve years he went to live on the farm of George Hoffman near Chambersburgh. At the age of twenty-one years he went to Franklin County, Ohio, and at the age of twenty-nine he was married to Miss Anna Good, a daughter of Joseph and Magdalena (Campbell) Good. The maternal ancestors came from Ireland, and there is a tradition that a large amount of property in Ireland belongs to the heirs of a brother and sister who were brought to this country by a stranger.

Mr. and Mrs. Horning had twelve children who were born to them: Katherine, who died in infancy; John H. who married Hattie (Harriet) Butler; Abraham A., who married Hester Beery; Lydia J.; Samuel, who married Fannie Gehman; Jacob R., who married Tina \_\_\_\_\_; Annie E. who is the wife of Benjamin Furgeson; Isaac and Leah, twins; Joseph; Henry, and Sarah E.

In 1853 Mr. Horning bought a farm in Franklin County, Ohio, where he lived until 1858. He then went to Allen County, Ohio, and located on a farm four and one-half miles from Lima; there he remained until 1864; and in that year he emigrated to Iowa and settled on the farm where his widow and children now reside. It consists of 302 acres of choice land, and is well improved in every respect. Both Mr. and Mrs. Horning were members of the Mennonite Church, and he died in the full faith and hope of a better life to come. He was a very industrious, economical young man, and labored earnestly to make a home for his family. He was quiet and unassuming in his manner, and took no part in public affairs. He died March 25, 1873, aged fifty-two years, one month, and nine days. He was universally respected and was deeply mourned by his family and a wide circle of friends. He left a fine estate to his family and the heritage of an honorable life and an unsullied name.

After the death of her husband Mrs. Horning settled up the estate

and although she met with some reverses, she has been very successful in her dealings; she has brought up her children to habits of industry and economy and in the principles of the Christian religion, and she may well be praised for the excellent manner in which she has fulfilled her task."

—Biographical History of Page County, Iowa

(Published by Lewis and Dunbar, Chicago, 1890)

## An Old Letter From Christian Warey

MELVIN GINGERICH

Christian Warey (1832-1914) was born in Ohio. He served the Pretty Prairie congregation, La Grange County, Indiana, as preacher until 1884 when he moved to Johnson County, Iowa. Here he was ordained bishop of the East Union Mennonite Church in 1885, in which position he served for many years. In 1855 he married Mary Troyer, the sister of Noah Troyer, who became the widely known Amish "sleeping preacher" of Johnson County, Iowa. Troyer began preaching in his sleep or in an unconscious state in 1878, and some time thereafter preached in this condition every night. Large crowds of people gathered to hear him and the newspapers of the area gave him considerable publicity. The letter below, written in 1879, by Christian Warey to his brother-in-law Noah Troyer, evidently refers to Troyer's preaching when it states, "I wish I was with you one night again."

Lyma Lagrang Ind

Febuary the 15th 1879

Dear and much respected friends and fellow travlers With me to the Bar of god I Wish you all the grase of god and the Love of Christ and the Power of the holy spirit aman first i Will say to you that we are still numbert among the Liveing yet and are still Blest With Bodyla helth so that We have no reason to Complain But are more indetet to Be thankfull to god the giver of all good gifts for his kind murcy and Blesings that he had on us yet further I Will say to you that Paps folks are all Well yet and are in good Chear Lidia Hostetler and fanny yoder are out here with their Babys on a Wiset they are going to start home next Tuesday again the Wether is somewhat moderate again but We have no sleighing eny more but the snow banks in some plases are as high as the fens further I let you no that sarah Kauffman Was

Buried Last tuesday she Was a Daughter of Rev Joseph Yoder she had Twins But they are Both Dead to their has Bean a grade meny Deths in Indiana this Winter and some Church troubels sins i Came home But it is all setelt again

I Wander how Church maters are out their by this time I think a grade Deal about youns i Wish i Was With you one Knight again i Would rather talk to youns then rite i Would Like to see friend abner yoder if you see him i Wish you Would ask him What the meaning of the Word Waldenser is and What for a Church the Waldenser Church Was i am ancious to no and if you rite to me Let me no that Preachers name that tried to make the Begining on sunday When abner yoder preach if you rite to me give me the number of abner yoders Box i forgot it i Wander Wether Daniel forgot the oald mans Postofes yet or not or Wehter he Can laugh about it yet or not Now I Will Close My Leter By sending our Love and Best Wishes to you all hopeing if We Cant see others here eny more in this World that We Can see others on the other side of Jurdan Whare their Will Be no Parding enymore But Whare We Can Be With our redemer Jeses Christ for ever o Let us try and Work out our souls salvation While it is Calt to day for our rase is soon run then We Will git the Prise O Let us Be faith full to our master so that We Will gane the Crown of gloye Pray for us I Will Do the same for you But in Weakness Christian Warey

## HAROLD S. BENDER (1897-1962)

The BULLETIN regretfully announces the death of one of its editors, Harold S. Bender, on September 21, 1962. He was first elected to the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church in 1927. Twenty years later he became the chairman of the Committee, a position which he held continuously. He gave energetic leadership to the Committee, being especially active in the collection of the manuscripts which now comprise the Archives of the Mennonite Church. It was his leadership that brought about the provision for the housing of the Archives in the new seminary building on the Goshen College campus. Active in the formation and guidance of the Mennonite Research Foundation, he led in the movement to combine the Research Foundation with the Historical Committee to form the Historical and Research Committee in 1959. His writing and editorial work in the area of Mennonite history made him a leader in the field. M.G.

## Mennonite Research News and Notes

MELVIN GINGERICH

Evelyn E. King, Dean of Women, Eastern Mennonite College, completed a master's thesis at Madison College in 1962 on "A Study of the Status of the Unmarried Women Graduates of Eastern Mennonite College."

The final wording of Peter J. Klassen's doctor's dissertation at the University of Southern California was "The Economics of Anabaptism, 1525-1560," in contrast to the earlier reported wording.

Leland Harder, Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana, received his Ph.D. degree at Northwestern University, June 16, 1962. His thesis was on "The Quest for Equilibrium in an Established Sect: A Study of Social Change in the General Conference Mennonite Church."

Jesse Yoder, Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana, received his Ph.D. degree at Northwestern University, June 16, 1962. His study was on the Frankenthal debate with the Anabaptists in 1571.

Eric W. Gritsch, Professor of Church History at Lutheran Theological Seminary wrote a doctoral dissertation at Yale in 1960 on "The Authority of the Inner Word: A Theological Study of the Major German Spiritual Reformers in the Sixteenth Century." Muentzer, Denck, Franck, Weigel, and Carlstadt were covered.

Irvin B. Horst has a grant from the Folger-Shakespeare Library in Washington, D. C., to do the final phases of his doctor's thesis on the relationship of the English and Continental Anabaptists.

The Archives of the Mennonite Church has recently acquired the correspondence and papers of Paul Erb, long time professor in Mennonite colleges and editor of the church organ *Gospel Herald*.

The Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities transferred its early records to the Archives of the Mennonite Church in July 1962.

In 1894 Harper and Brothers published *In Old New York*, by Thomas A. Janvier. Between pages 48 and 49 of this book is a plan of the city of New York of 1767 surveyed by Bernard Ratzen. Location 15 of this map indicates an Anabaptist meetinghouse. In another place in the same book, between pages 54 and 55, is a map of New York dated November 1803. It was drawn from an actual survey by Casimir Th. Goerck and Joseph Fr. Mangin, city surveyor. On this map is located the same Anabaptist meetinghouse.

The location is evidently on the west side of Gold Street between John Street and Fair Street. Paul Shank of the Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pennsylvania owns a copy of the book.

Estel Nafziger has completed a master's thesis in the Economics Department of the University of Michigan on "The Mennonite Ethic in the Weberian Framework."

Bruno A. Penner wrote a Th.M. thesis on "The Anabaptist View of the Scriptures" in 1955 at Bethany Biblical Seminary and Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

C. Nevin Miller wrote a master's thesis in 1957 at the Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary on "The Effectiveness of Eastern Mennonite College to Achieve Its Religious Life Objectives."

The Juniata Historical Society, Co-columbus, Pennsylvania, is gathering materials on the history of the first settlement in the valley. It is planned to have a two hundredth anniversary publication in 1974.

Guy F. Hershberger has been elected to succeed the late H. S. Bender as editor of *The Mennonite Quarterly Review*.

The Mennonite Historical and Research Committee, Goshen, Indiana, has published a booklet by Melvin Gingerich on "The Work of the Local Church Historian." It gives directions on how the local historian can perform his duties. Copies may be ordered for twenty cents each.

A Mennonite Family Census will be conducted early in 1963 by the Mennonite Historical and Research Committee. It is similar to the church-wide Mennonite Family Census conducted in 1950 but this one will be utilized only in a representative sampling of churches which will include fifteen percent of the entire church membership. Questions concerning the age of church members, size of families, occupations, residence, age at baptism, etc., will be asked.

The *Mennonite Quarterly Review* for January 1963 has as its lead article "The Grace of God in Christ as Understood by Five Major Anabaptist Writers," by Alvin J. Beachy.

\* \* \*

The records of the former Mennonite Home Mission, 1907 South Union Ave., Chicago, Illinois, have been deposited in the Archives of the Mennonite Church.

\* \* \*

J. H. Yoder's *Täufertum und Reformation in der Schweiz. I. Die Gespräche zwischen Täufern und Reformatoren 1523-1538* is now available from the Herald Press, Scottdale, Pa., for \$2.50.

## Book Reviews

*Our Amish Neighbors.* By William I. Schreiber, professor of German, College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio. Bibliography. Index. Published by The University of Chicago Press. 1962. Pp. 227. \$5.95.

Here is a book already in great demand by students and friends of the Old Order Amish. For his research Professor Schreiber enjoys the advantage of being a German-born American familiar with the "Pennsylvania Dutch" dialect which until within recent years bore a close resemblance to that spoken in the Rhenish Palatinate. Much that he reports in this book comes from first hand association with the Amish in their homes and in their worship services. He supplements this intimate knowledge of Amish life and folkways, gained from visiting with Amish farmers both laymen and ordained bishops, preachers and deacons, with extensive reading and research in Amish and Mennonite history. He aims to present this material with sympathy and scholarly completeness.

In his "Introduction: A Day with the Amish" the writer describes a visit to an Amish church service. Although not technically accurate in every detail, the account does catch the spirit of the meeting in a delightful manner. The three chapters that follow narrate the history of the Amish in their European background, their terrible persecution, their coming to America and their brave effort to maintain their religion and their way of life in their new home. The story is told with sympathy and appreciation.

Professor Schreiber devotes a chapter to the widely publicized "Meidung" controversy resulting in a suit brought by an expelled member against the ministers of the Amish congregation which had placed him under the ban. Although Professor Schreiber attempts to remain detached, his narrative of the "Meidung" incident leans toward the conventional, unsympathetic, non-Amish attitude. His background does not permit him to grant the Amish full recognition of their interpretation of the Holy Scriptures as held and practiced by the Amish and their "Swiss Brethren" antecedents since the Reformation.

One aspect of Schreiber's account may prove a bit confusing to the uninitiated reader. Wayne County is the home of both Amish and Mennonites ranging from the most conservative to the most progressive congregation in each group. *Our Amish Neighbors* does not always distinguish which is which in spite

(Continued on Page 8)

## BOOK REVIEWS

(Continued from Preceding Page)

of an evident effort to do so. Another item one might point out is the spelling of the word for church or congregation which the Amish use for both the worship service and the congregation. This term spelled "Gemei" by Schreiber is invariably pronounced as if it were spelled "Gmay" one syllable, not two.

An entire chapter is devoted to an analysis of *The Sugar Creek Budget*, a weekly news sheet printed in Tuscarawas county since May 15, 1890, and read widely throughout America. Wherever Amish live and wherever they move to set up a new colony, there the Budget follows them. Schreiber's description of this unorthodox publication — unorthodox, that is, from the newspaper publisher's standpoint — is one of the most delightful portions of the book.

The volume deserves wide reading among students and others who wish to learn more about our Amish friends and neighbors, who have succeeded in transplanting to America and preserving amid our complex, changing society, a fine type of medieval Christian peasant social, economic and religious organization.

Few books by an "outsider" merit as high praise as Schreiber's. It is well-written, interesting and complete, at least so far as a non-Amish author could be expected to present a subject of such puzzling complexity.

A hundred fine drawings by Sybil Gould add greatly to reader interest and enjoyment of the volume. With extreme simplicity and economy of line the artist presents features of Amish life and culture which might require pages of description. Such is the drawing on the jacket where every figure breathes a spirit of well-being and rural contentment. Equally charming and informing is that on page 41 or those on pages 72, 116, 118 and 144. But why draw attention only to these? Nearly half the pages delight the reader with some new view of Amish home, field or garden as seen through the kind eye of the sympathetic artist thrilled by the beauty and the simplicity of the scenes and objects which he depicts.

As pointed out above, the book is not without its faults; but the average reader will enjoy its evident attempt to treat the subject wholesomely and fairly and with remarkable completeness. The treatment is objective and avoids any effort at sensationalism. Perhaps one should remember that this is the story of the Amish in northeastern Ohio and particularly of Wayne County where some of the reported excesses of

Amish young people in their early teens who have not yet united with the church are practically unknown.

*No Other Foundation, Commemorative Essays on Menno Simons.* By Walter Klassen, William Keeney, Russell Mast, Vernon Neufeld, and Cornelius Krahn; Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, 1962. 76 pp. \$1.50.

The first two chapters of this paperback collection of essays treat Menno's life and times and his basic beliefs. This is followed by two more chapters dealing with his convictions on three specific subjects, namely, faith, reason, and the Scriptures. The next pair of chapters discuss Menno's contribution to this century and the spread of Mennonitism throughout the world. A closing chapter gives a brief survey of the more significant research done concerning Menno in the past 50 years.

Without exception these essays were prepared for the commemoration in January 1962 of Menno Simons' death 400 years ago. All but one of them were written and given especially for the observance of this event by the faculty and friends of Bethel College.

Obviously, these essays were intended for popular conception. They are general and selective in their content. As spoken addresses, they would have had all the coherence that could be expected. As a published tribute, they leave much to be desired. The reader wonders how much the writers are interpreting Menno's thought rather than reporting it. At times Menno's views are described in words and ideas that are controversial today. Are the authors reading modern views into the words of their subject or was Menno that modern. I am not heresy-hunting but I am lamenting ambiguity.

William Keeney is unclear on a number of points that he attempts to elucidate. For example, he says that Menno's doctrine of the Incarnation is more widely misunderstood than any other, and that John C. Wenger's reference to it does not catch the full significance of this view. But Mr. Keeney does not then clarify *what* is misunderstood about this doctrine nor yet *what* the full significance is. Again, it seems that he makes too sharp a distinction when he says that the Anabaptists did not believe that justification was an idea or position but rather a transformation of life. Furthermore, it is said that the church in history was established with Adam and Eve and that the conflict as a result of the apostasy in

heaven "was transferred to history in the very person in whom the church had its origin." Who is the person alluded to—Christ, Adam, or who?

Russell Mast says that Menno can not be regarded as a literalist in his use of the Scriptures. It might have been helpful for him to have stated whether he thought Menno could be regarded as a Biblicalist since this is the word used so commonly today. (Frankly, it seems doubtful to me, at least until "Biblicalist" is defined more clearly than it has been so far, that Menno could be regarded as either of these.)

Vernon Neufeld has a somewhat confusing discussion of what the authority was for Menno; church, Bible or the living Christ. He says that he accepted the authority of the living Christ above either the church or the Bible, yet he proceeds to say that "the Bible has been and should remain authoritative in life," and again, "The Bible is to be authoritative in life even as it was authoritative for Menno." We know that Menno also believed the congregation had some authority. A confusing number of authorities are spoken of without being untangled and given an order of priority.

It would seem to me that one of the older "lives" of Menno would still fill the need for a biography best among us today (such as written by H. S. Bender found in the latest edition of Menno's complete writings edited by John C. Wenger and that Littell's *A Tribute to Menno Simons* would serve as a fuller and more satisfactory treatment of his basic beliefs.

Gerald C. Studer  
Scottdale, Pennsylvania

## THE HORNING FAMILY

(Continued from Page 5)

told us that in Spachbrucken, too, such was the case.

When I sent Mrs. Krell a picture of my mother, she said in her reply that they said my mother had a "right Horning face." There was a remarkable resemblance between my mother and Mrs. Illert, who was Mrs. Krell's grandmother.

In the meantime, we hope to gather information about the families of my great-grandfather's brother and sisters, who we believe live near Chambersburg and Ephrata, Pennsylvania. Of them we have practically no information."

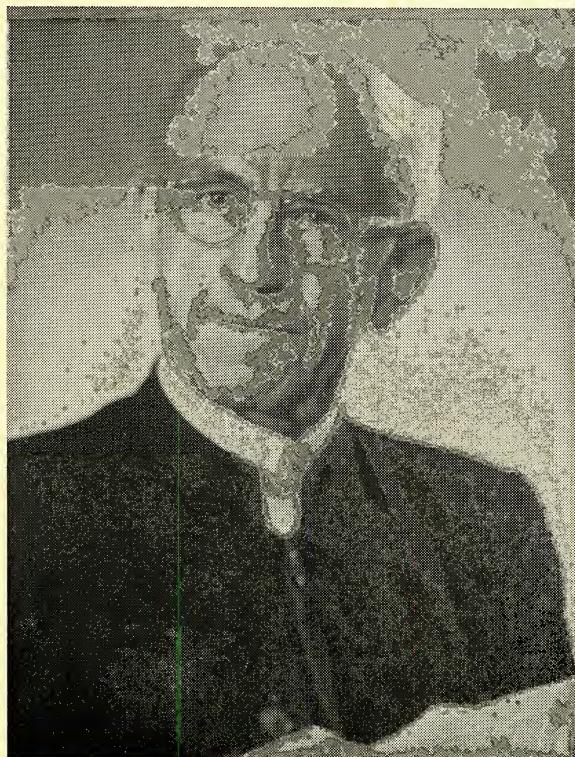
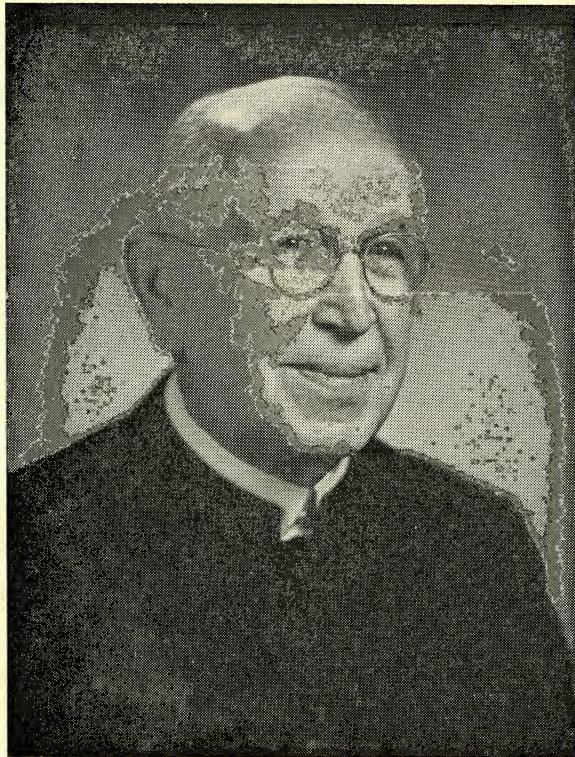
Ray H. Burley  
113 Park Drive  
Stillwater, Oklahoma

# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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No. 2



THESE MEN SERVED HISTORICAL COMMITTEE MANY YEARS

Samuel Frederic Coffman (1872-1954), Vineland, Ontario, whose portrait is to the left above, was born in Rockingham County, Virginia, the son of John S. and Elizabeth (Heatwole) Coffman. He was a leading bishop in the Mennonite Church and served on many church-wide committees. When the Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference was formed in 1911, Coffman became its first chairman, a position which he held continuously until 1947. He continued on the Committee until 1953, thus serving it for forty-two years.

Jacob Brubaker Smith (1870-1951), Elida, Ohio, was a leading minister and educator of the Mennonite Church. Born in Waterloo County, Ontario, he early came to the States, where he served the rest of his life. He too became a member of the Historical Committee when it was established in 1911 and served on it continuously until 1949, for a total of thirty-eight years. Only Coffman served on the Committee longer than he. M.G. (Coffman picture by Belair.)

## Old Letters Concerning Sonnenberg

The first settlers of what came to be the Sonnenberg Mennonite Church in Wayne County, Ohio, arrived in that county from Switzerland in 1819. Deacon Jacob J. Moser, who died in 1922, had a valuable note book giving the history of the community. The two old letters reproduced in translation below are in this book. The copy of the book was furnished by S. W. Sommer, Millersburg, Ohio, and is in the Archives of the Mennonite Church.

The first letter was written by Elder David Baumgartner, who came to Wayne County from Switzerland in 1835 and lived there three years before moving on to Adams County, Indiana, where he lived in 1853 when at the age of 88 he wrote the letter below.

The second letter was written by Deacon Peter P. Lehman, who moved from Wayne County to Missouri in 1866. It begins by referring to the Baumgartner letter but it does not carry a date.

Adams County Indiana  
January 21, 1853

This is the day when I celebrate my 88th birthday. To my son David.

I wish you, your loved ones and friends the unfathomable [undendliche] love of God and grace of Jesus Christ and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, with my heartfelt greeting [Herz freundlichen Liebes Grusz.]

I have often thought of writing to you, but hardly knew what to write.

As I am not able to do much work I have the more time to think over the past. I can remember back 80 years. For 40 years I could converse with my parents and Godly old people and so I have direct face to face information of many events that happened in the past concerning the church.

When I consider the great changes that have come about since the days of long ago it makes me pause and wonder what the future will bring.

For if the way of our church life changes as much in the next hundred years as it has in the past 100 years there will be little left but outward ceremonials, and little of the Life that God gives.

I shall hasten to the message I had in mind when I began this letter; namely, how our forefathers got into the Bisthüm.

(Continued on Page 2)

### OLD LETTERS CONCERNING SONNENBERG

(Continued from Page 1)

While the persecution in Berne continued many left the country to find other places where there was freedom, at which places many remain to this day.

They lived a quiet, solitary life and were content when they had shelter and food.

But the enemy appeared before them. They were slandered and made to appear as dangerous to the country.

They brought their malicious attacks so far that the Prince issued a mandate or order that the Mennomites should leave the country.

A time had been appointed when they were to leave. My stepmother related to me that she worked for people on the Munster Barg [a mountain] who told her how the people were in sorrow and in fear. They did not work any more. They wept and prayed, — did not know what to do or where to go.

Then in this hour of darkness and distress a man of good repute, who stood high in the community took a kindly interest in these afflicted people and went to the prince and pled in their behalf. He said that the people were not harmful or dangerous to the country.

Much rather that they were useful because by them much land is cultivated that cannot be plowed and must be tilled with pick and shovel.

They raise produce, he said, which sustains a tenth of the people. They are good workers and pay the rent money satisfactorily.

Through their efforts the whole country is benefited.

The prince revoked the mandate but only as long as it might be his wish, and this only on condition that these people do not buy land and do not live in cities and villages, but only on the mountains.

So the old man for whom I worked often told me.

Our church was only tolerated at his discretion, but we rejoiced and thanked God for this privilege.

We encouraged one another to live quiet and modest lives, and because we had so much freedom the members of the church all agreed that they would present the prince with a fine linen piece of cloth to show their appreciation. My father once accompanied those who carried such a gift to the prince, which he accepted thankfully.

So much for the physical side of our way of life and our civil difficulties, and now some matters pertaining to religion.

I remember how it was when I was a youth, and when young people desired to join church. They announced it a good while before to the church and the ministers.

When I arrived at the proper age I followed the customary procedure but the true understanding was lacking. I went through the outward ceremonies and believed like the others that it was sufficient.

In those days it was the custom that people prayed three times a day.

Also in the Spring and in the Fall prayer and Thanksgiving days were observed.

The Lord's Day was observed but there were those who left for Sunday some tasks that should have been done on other days, and forgot what Isaiah said in Chap. 58 v. 13 "If thou turn away thy foot—from doing thy pleasure on my holy day and call the Sabbath a delight"—and Ezekiel Chap. 20 Verses 11 and 12.

Because of the freedom we enjoyed the young people became more thoughtless and frivolous [leicht sinnig]. I was not any better. Yet my conscience often upbraided me when the Sunday had passed.

I did not have much time [for vanity] for when I was 24 years old I entered into service. I soon saw what it means to enter into union with Christ through baptism, when one takes a vow to live for Him and not for self and the world; but to live for Him who saved us from the power of Satan, and we are to live a new life. For salvation is not promised without repentance and a change of heart, and because we insist on a change of heart some are made to feel conscious of wrong attitudes and selfishness and are not able to stand correction; then they begin to talk around that we are preaching another gospel.

Far from it, for we hold on to the true apostolic and evangelistic teaching, as the Apostles and their disciples and our forefathers attested with their goods and their lives.

But we see that many go through the outward form of baptism and take the baptismal vows and promise to live for Jesus to live a godly life of which we often do not have much evidence.

For the apostle teaches or admonishes "Study to show thyself approved"—so to live that it will cor-

respond to the teachings of the gospel.

Also examine yourselves to see if you are true to the faith. When I think of the words of the song in the Handbook where the opening words are "Versucht Euch" etc. [Put yourself to the test] and verse 7, I feel a lack of true piety. But the Apostle says "Follow after peace and holiness."

The Lord grant to me and all who desire it grace through Jesus Christ, Amen.

I shall close; do not think my son, that I am reproaching you or anyone else in particular, for as I said before why I write as I do.

We desire and wish for nothing more than that the church should be built up and the kingdom of darkness destroyed. But the enemy is still active and so he scatters accusations among the brethren.

The Lord forgive you as I forgive you and pray for you. There would be many more things to write and to investigate wherein the trend to worldliness lies. Maybe another time more if I shall live.

In closing we greet you all with best wishes for your prosperity of soul and body. I greet also the other ministers and all who inquire about us. Pray for us and we are also so inclined toward you. The Lord be with you all. Amen. Wishing you salvation and blessing.

David Baumgartner.

#### Letter from P. P. Lehman and the Beginning of the Immigration

This letter is so very interesting because it deals with the life of our forefathers how they moved into the Bistum and how they were in danger of being again driven from the land; as David Baumgartner says that his father had accompanied those who carried a fine linen cloth that they might continue to receive the favor and toleration of the prince of that country.

Also how they lived a quiet and modest life, much in prayer to God. I remember well how my father often told how his parents and grandmother related how poor and wretched [toilsome] their life was.

In godly fear they encouraged one another when they met together. They reminded each other of God's promises and His word and were much in prayer, not only three times a day but often and much. Especially in the evening when it became dusk one went here and

another there into some secluded spot, and prayed to the Lord.

It is to be desired that such practices would be the custom of our generation, and that the love of Christ would constrain us to do so. Furthermore, because these people had promised the rulers that they and their children would not buy land, but would live in the mountains as tenant people, it became very difficult eventually as the population increased, to make a living in the mountainous country. For as they increased in considerable numbers the properties that could be rented became expensive.

At the same time it took more money to pay rent, taxes, etc. It became burdensome for a poor man with many children to make a living. At that time a letter was received in Switzerland from Benedict Schrock who had settled in Green Township, Wayne Co., Ohio. He was full of praise for America.

So the following persons decided to emigrate to America in 1819. Peter Lehman, Isaac Sommer, Ulrich Lehman, David Kirchhofer.

They began their journey at Havre, France, and landed in New York after 47 days.

They came through Philadelphia, Lancaster, Pittsburg and Canton to within 4 miles of Wooster where they tarried for one month, living in a school house.

After much investigating in the midst of the settlement they bought land.

The first thing they did was to clear a space in the primeval forest and build block houses and clear the land.

The inhabitants of the land were few and spoke a strange language. Also these new settlers from Switzerland were poor; but they did not suffer for lack of food because when they worked for those already here they earned enough to buy provisions. Before the Ohio Canal was built there was no market for the products they raised at least they could not sell for money.

There were few mills and those were distant at least 20 miles; therefore corn and potatoes took the place of bread.

Yet they never regretted that they came to this land. They saw that wages for the work they did were much higher than they received on the wild mountains in Switzerland. And again the freedom of conscience, to be able to worship God according to the convictions of his heart and mind, without written instructions and regulations by the civil authorities. And so wrote Peter Lehman and Isaac Sommer concerning this land, to their friends and relatives in Switzerland.

They also wrote how there was so much cheap land here in America.

This influenced 7 families and a number of unmarried persons to come over here in the year 1821.

1817—Benedict Schrapp.

1821—John Lehman, Elder Abraham Lehman, John and Christian Lehman, Abraham Zuercher, Jacob Bixler, Jacob Moser (father of Deacon Jacob J. Moser), Peter Hofstetter, David and Samuel Zuercher.

1822—Ulrich Gerber, Teacher of the Book, Michael Gerber, Steward [armen pfleger], Jacob Gerber.

1824—Peter and John Welty, John and Abraham Tschantz, Christian Beer, John and Christian Waly, Christian and Abraham Giliom, Nickolas Hofstetter, Abraham Falb, Michael Boegli, John Luginbill, David Baumgardner, Ulrich Sommer and Peter Schneck.

1825—David Althaus, Ulrich and Peter Moser. In this year from Alsace came Daniel Steiner, Elder Teacher [Aeltester Lehrer], Ulrich and Christian Steiner. These moved to Chippewa (N.E. part of Wayne Co.) and founded a church there.

1828—In this year a few more arrived among whom were John Heyerly and Isaac Falb. From year to year more arrived and to report all would be quite a task.

1835—During this year came David Baumgardner, Elder Teacher [Aeltester Lehrer], as was reported on a previous page. Also Christian Tschantz Deacon [Armen Pfleger], John, Peter and Abraham C. Tschantz. In the same year many more families came from Alsace; among them were Christian Steiner [Aeltester Lehrer].

They did not remain here but moved the same year to Putnam Co., Ohio, for the reason that two years before a Mr. Michael Neuenschwaner had settled at that place. Many more followed him and in a short time there was a large church.

So much for the immigration. I was much interested in ascertaining the time and the names of the first immigrants and their ministers and leaders [varsteher u diener].

As the first four families had no teacher [Lehrer] they were lone-some. I remember well what joy was expressed, how their tears flowed when they could meet some more of their friends and brothers in the faith, and had the hope that in the not distant future they might

build up a church. [to have services].

Their love for one another was much warmer than it is today. They were poor and were relying on each other. They received their newly arrived friends with gladness into their block houses.

They supported one another with what little they had; they lived simply, in humility and without pride. [Pracht].

When I compare the present time with the past, the great change in a period of 80 years, then I have to say with the old teacher [Lehrer] David Baumgardner, what will it finally lead to. But I must hurry on and hope for the best.

From Deacon Peter P. Lehman

## Eli Frey's Lecture Topics

Elias (Eli) L. Frey (1856-1942), a leading Ohio Mennonite bishop in the first half of the 20th century, bishop of the Fulton County Amish Mennonite district under the Ohio and Eastern A. M. Conference 1908-42, descended from an old Montbeliard (France) family, his father having immigrated from there in 1839, settling in Fulton County near Pettisville in 1844. He was baptized in 1880, ordained deacon in 1884. He married Anna Short, was the father of 11 children, one of whom, Philemon, is now a minister in his father's congregation. He was an able speaker and administrator, a rare combination of conservative and progressive attitudes, served as moderator of the Eastern A. M. Conference several times and as moderator of the Mennonite General Conference 1917-19, was a member of the Peace Problems Committee 1913-37 and its chairman 1925-35, and a member and officer of the Mennonite Relief Commission.

(Mennonite Encyclopedia)

Frey often was on the staff of Bible Conferences, which was the name commonly given in the Mennonite Church to a series of meetings in a local congregation, at which various ministers delivered addresses on various topics of doctrinal, ethical, and practical character. H. S. Bender wrote of these conferences, "They were called Bible conferences because the speakers sought to present their material on the basis of a careful study of all the pertinent Scriptures and often used the method of assigning Bible verses to members of the audience to be read by them and then commented upon by the speaker. Sessions were usually held morning, afternoon, and evening, continuing for a week,

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## The Mennonite Church in Jamaica

CARL HARMAN

### I. Land of Jamaica

The Island, for many years a British possession in the West Indies, is approximately 650 miles south of Miami, Florida. The Island covers 4,441 square miles and has a population of thirteen million people. There is a mixture of Indians, Whites, Negroes, and Chinese on the island.

On the island there is much class feeling due to the different races and the wealthy and poor classes. Most of them are very poor and don't have work; living costs are very high.

It seems everyone on the island is religious. The most popular church is the Anglican Church of England, but there are some Catholics, Brethren and Methodists, and scores of protestant groups. Youth for Christ and other American evangelists work here, but only around five out of every hundred converts join the church fellowship.

### II. Virginia Mennonites take interest in Jamaica.

Through contacts with some Jamaicans and the hearing of the need in Jamaica, several people in the Virginia Conference developed a conviction that someone should look into the spiritual need there. They contacted the General Mission Board of Mennonite Missions and Charities and the Eastern Board of Mennonite Missions and Charities for information and suggestions. They took the concern to the Virginia Conference in April 1955. The Virginia Mission Board decided to back an investigation, and began the planning of a trip to Jamaica. They picked three men who had particular interest there, Brothers Mahlon Blosser, Myron Augsburger and Warren Metzler, to make the trip. They left on May 4, 1955, and spent five days investigating and touring the island.

### III. Development of a Mennonite Witness in Jamaica.

Mr. and Mrs. P. H. Lowen were the first Mennonites to do mission work on the island. They are a couple from Manitoba, Canada, who had interest in the field and started a Sunday School at Constant Spring in October, 1954. Their work was richly blessed, but they had many handicaps, such as the lack of Sunday School material. Because of their age and health the doctor had advised them to go back to Canada. They asked their home church to take the work over, but the church felt it impossible, so the Lowens

asked the Virginia Conference to take up the work.

As a result of their work, there was an average attendance of eighty at Sunday School, about fifty adults at Wednesday evening prayer meeting, and around forty adults at Sunday morning preaching. There were also some street meetings held. At the present time (1962) there are around twenty-two prospective members.

### IV. Background of the Group.

Before the Lowens came, more of the people in the groups went to the Pilgrim Holiness Church. But this church seemed to have lost its standards in Jamaica, and some of the people left and came to the Lowens' Sunday school. Some of these people are taking a very active interest; one is assisting in preaching. Some others have interest in the new group, but are waiting to see how permanent it is. The converts seem to have a deep sense of conversion and have a sincere testimony.

### V. Characteristics of the Group.

There is a warm spirit in the group which shows in their singing and testimonies. By watching the group, Bros. Blosser, Augsburger, and Metzler noted the following characteristics.

1. Major emphasis on new birth experience.
2. Deep desire to obey the word.
3. Warm Christian fellowship.
4. Clear testimony.
5. A concept of the separation of the Christian from the world.
6. Concept of victorious living.
7. Remarkable ability in Congregational singing.
8. Deep missionary zeal.
9. Good application of modesty in dress.

### VI. The Mission Today.

There are four churches on the island today (1962), and there are three missionary families. Mr. and Mrs. Warren Metzler are located at Kingston, the Capital of Jamaica. Mr. Metzler is pastor of the Good Tidings Church. Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Brunk are at Retreat on the upper north coast; Mr. Brunk is the pastor of the Calvary Mennonite Church. Mr. and Mrs. John Shank are located at Sterling Castle, approximately sixteen miles from Kingston, where Mr. Shank is the pastor of Alphine Mennonite Church. There is only one native minister so far, Bro. Nathaniel Leer, and he is located fifteen miles north of Kings-

ton and is pastor of the Hall Green congregation. The total membership of the churches is one hundred fourteen, and the churches are growing very rapidly.

The Good Tidings Church was dedicated in 1957, the church at Hall Green was dedicated in 1960, the Calvary Church was dedicated in November 1961, and Alphine Mennonite Church, the last, dedicated on February 25, 1962.

Brother Truman Brunk is still Bishop over the four churches in Jamaica, and the people always request Mr. Brunk to baptize them in a river. There are two native deacons for the four churches. Brother Simeon Walters and Brother Philip Baker. These two men are very dedicated to the church work there.

In 1959 Mr. and Mrs. John Shank started a children's home for girls, in an attempt to try to stop girls from being sent from home and from living with men without being married. There are sixteen girls who stay in the home now. This home is supported by the Peggy Memorial Fund and individuals may also adopt a girl and pay for her board at the home. The girls make many craft products and sell them in the United States to help pay for the home and their board. There is also a kindergarten connected with the home, which has an enrollment of 118. There are three native teachers who teach in this department, and the pupil pays a small tuition to pay the teachers and a part of the operating expense. Two native women, Mrs. Obrien and Miss Kathleen Baker, stay with the sixteen girls at the home.

There is a seminary on the island at Kingston, where fourteen men are enrolled. Our Mennonite church has one man there now, Ransford Nicolson. He also does some preaching in the four churches on the island.

The Virginia Mission Board has purchased cars for the Missionary families there and has also bought homes close to their churches.

The most recent development is the organization of an annual conference each year at Kingston. This, so far, has been very successful.

Harrisonburg, Virginia

The *Gospel Herald* of October 9, 1962, contained an article by John C. Wenger on "The Life and Contribution of Harold S. Bender, 1897-1962."

\* \* \*

Guy F. Hershberger has been elected editor of the *Mennonite Quarterly Review* to replace the late H. S. Bender.

## ELI FREY'S LECTURE TOPICS

(Continued from Page 3)

with two visiting ministers, in effect a sort of Bible school. These Bible conferences were inaugurated about 1890 and soon became very popular, continuing in widespread use until about the time of World War I after which they gradually died out. They usually were held in winter when farmers had only light work and had much time for meetings. They were a powerful influence in the church in the education of the laity in the message of the Bible and indoctrination of the principles of the church."

Often the speakers prepared charts or outlines of their addresses on sheets of muslin or heavy paper and displayed these on an easel or in some other fashion so that they could be read by the entire audience as the lecturer was speaking. The Frey collection of outlines is in the possession of the Archives of the Mennonite Church. Each outline is on a sheet of muslin about 2½ by 3 feet in size. The list of topics in the Frey collection is given below. It gives an insight into the emphases of these Bible conferences. M. G.

Historical Manuscripts 1-169  
Eli L. Frey (1856-1942) Collection

God  
Christian Discipleship  
Self Denial  
Judgement on Earth  
Modest Apparel  
Holy Kiss  
Marriage  
Practical Christianity in the Home  
Communion  
Sermon on the Mount (5 charts)  
Man the Creature  
The Fall of Man  
Giving  
Redemption  
The Bible: The Word of God  
Repentance  
Resurrection  
Baptism  
Christian Activity  
Church Government  
Covetousness  
Devotional Covering  
Duty of Church to Minister  
Evils of the Tongue  
Faith  
God the Creator  
Heaven  
How Sin Against the Holy Spirit  
Lord's Day, The  
Man the Creature  
Marriage  
Ministry of the Word  
Needs of the Church  
Non-Conformity  
Non-Resistance  
Our Enemies  
Power of Habit  
Practical Consecration

Present and Future, of Wicked and Righteous  
Regeneration  
Reward of Righteous  
Second Coming of Christ  
Secret Societies  
Seven Churches  
Worldly Gatherings

## Belton, Missouri

J. D. HARTZLER

As a young man I knew some of our ministers had held meetings at Belton, Mo., about half the distance between Garden City and Kansas City, but had never read anything about it. When I was at Hesston, Kansas, I became quite well acquainted with J. B. Smith. I had heard that he had preached at Belton. So in 1949 I wrote Brother Smith and asked him a number of questions. I enclose the answers he gave me which may be of interest to you.

I will give a few comments which may make some of his statements have more meaning.

In No. 1, D. K. of course is Daniel Kauffman who was the bishop in charge at Bethel. I suppose the preliminary conference was preliminary to General Conference.

2. The D. Y. Hooley was Dan Hooley who was a brother to the mother of Prof. Walter E. Yoder, Goshen, Indiana. I think he went with a holiness group. While I was living at Hesston, Daniel Kauffman preached one evening and in his illustrations referred to a certain organization or church near Eight Mile and where there are now a few graves. Likely this was a "holiness" group.

5. This "Pre." Hauder was the father-in-law to Lee Hartzler of Goshen, Indiana.

6. This was the first time I knew that John S. Coffman held a series of meetings at Belton. I knew he held meetings in the Garden City area.

Elida, O., 12/22/49.

Dear Bro. Hertzler: In reply to your letter of inquiry I will begin with a few preliminary facts:

1. I came to Bethel Church at the request of D. K.'s call at the time of the Preliminary Conf. at Elida O. in 1897 while I was attending the U. at Ada, O.

2. The prime reason for the call was because D. Y. Hooley had joined with the saints & Bethel church was without a pastor.

3. I taught Eight Mile school two terms (west of Garden City some 4 miles).

4. I think the second year after my arrival Bro. Hooley came back & was restored with his ministry as well.

5. The same time Bro. (Pre) Hauder & family moved in. This left three ministers at Bethel.

6. During this time J.S.C. held revival meetings at Belton—there were a few converts. A Sister Harnish formerly of Pa had a family of some half a dozen children. I think she had left the faith & at least one of her children accepted Christ & was received.

7. I was filling appointments at a school house 1 mile north of Belton, I think every two weeks beginning the 2nd year of my arrival at Bethel. Then the request came for me to teach school at Belton 1899-1900 following the J.S.C. meetings. I boarded at a Meck family about a mile north of Belton. They had a daughter Mattie Meck. I think they were Methodists but had a Mennonite parentage. If Mattie still lives & is in the neighborhood you could get a lot of information from her.

8. I do not remember whether it was at the suggestion of D.K. or J.S.C. that I filled appointments at Belton. I attended some of J.S.C.'s meetings at Belton where he had a full house of listeners.

9. While at Belton I received a call through M. S. Steiner to accept the pastorate at W. Liberty, Ohio where the pastor Christ Byler had begun working with a holiness group. The latter virtually "ran the meeting" at Bethel & Byler amening the movement. I accepted the call in the spring of 1901, returned to near Bluffton, Ohio, where I married Lena Burkhart, stayed with her folks (Pre. Isaac B.) till we secured a home at W. Liberty & served as pastor there until D. H. Bender sent me a call to come to Hesston which I accepted in 1909.

10. I don't think services were held at Belton after I left there.

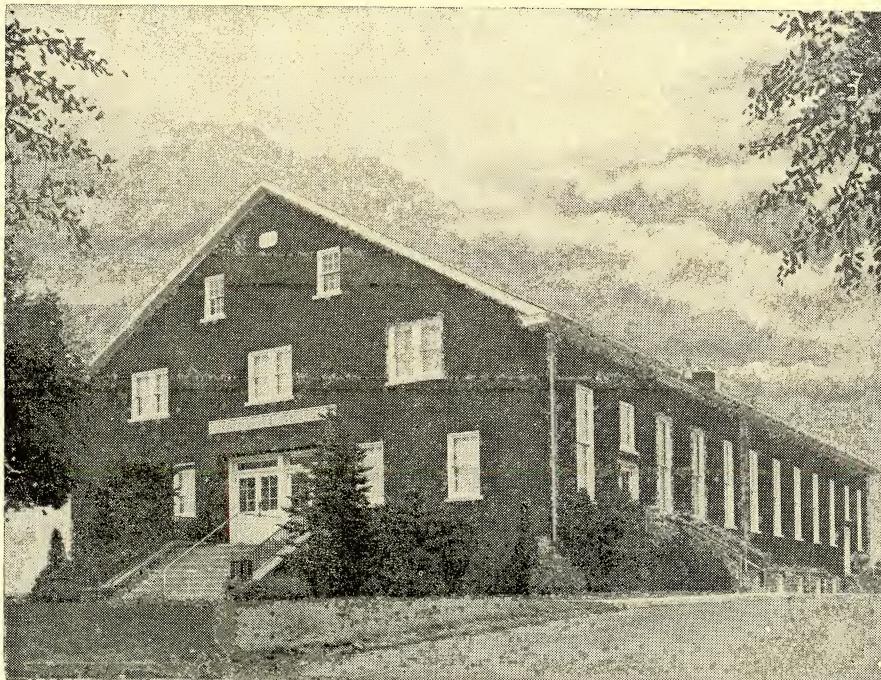
11. I think there was a "Bear" family near the school house north where the mother (if I remember) was a member of our church. The father was well disposed toward our people for I remember he said if I would come back to teach the next year, he would give me a fat hog.

12. I think if you would get on the ground north of Belton you would be able to secure facts such as per your interest.

Yours cordially

J. B. Smith

The review in the January issue of *Our Amish Neighbors* was written by John Umble.



BLOOMING GLEN MENNONITE CHURCH  
Built in 1938

## History of the Blooming Glen Mennonite Church

JUDITH RAE SCHMELL

### Early History

William Penn's partition deed of 1735 opened the manor of Perkasie for settlement. Among the earliest immigrants were several Mennonites, including Henry Funk, Christian Lederach, John Funk, Andrew Godshall, Valentine Kratz, and Hooper Cassel. "They were stern devout adherents to the faith of their choice and determined to establish firmly in the area a church where their children and children's children could worship in the faith of their fathers."<sup>1</sup>

Thus on a plot of Henry Funk's land in the year 1753, the Perkasie Mennonite Meetinghouse, a 20 x 24 foot log structure, was erected. This land, located across the road from the present building, was apparently donated without a deed. The oldest deed known was granted by John Kratz in 1793 for sixty and one half perches of land.

Two more lots, including the site of the present church, were granted in 1818 by Jacob Kratz (the son of John Kratz.) A new stone meetinghouse, built in 1823, soon proved inadequate. An addition gave the building the measurements of 38 x 47 feet.

<sup>1</sup> "Blooming Glen Church Reviews 200-Year History," *News-Herald* (Dec. 10, 1953), sec. 4, p. 3.

Some fifty years later the need for a still larger building was felt. On the day following the harvest thank offering in July 1882 the old structure was torn down. By November the 51 x 65 foot stone building was completed and the local newspaper gave an interesting account of the first service held there. "It was crowded to the utmost, between six and seven hundred persons being present. The heater sent up its heat to such an extent (as) to oblige some to take off their coats."<sup>2</sup>

Ordained at Deep Run in 1738, Abraham Swartz was the first minister to occupy the pulpit. The first resident minister, Jacob Meyer, succeeded him.

During the next century Samuel Meyer, Henry Hunsberger, Jacob Hunsicker, Henry B. Moyer, Isaac Oberholtzer, George Landis, and Abraham F. Moyer were ordained to serve as ministers. Two of these persons later were bishops in the district of Doylestown, Deep Run, and Perkasie (Blooming Glen).

The names of only six deacons are known who served during this time. One of these deacons, David L. Fretz, his brother, and the church trustees were involved in litigation. The case was taken to the Supreme

<sup>2</sup> *Central News* [Sellersville] (Nov. 30, 1882).

Court and in 1893 Deacon Fretz sued Bishop Samuel Gross. The conference expelled Fretz and he joined the General Conference Mennonites as a layman.<sup>3</sup>

### The Church During the Last Century

In 1885 the village name of Perkasie was changed to Blooming Glen. It was about this time that a new era was born in the history of Blooming Glen Mennonite Church.

Bishop Andrew S. Mack was one of the strongest leaders in the Franconia Conference during the nineteenth century, and in this same year another promising young man was ordained to the ministry. Henry B. Rosenberger, who had attended the Upper Hilltown Baptist Sunday School as a boy, was an active promoter of the first Sunday school to be held at Blooming Glen Meetinghouse in 1887. There was an average attendance of 175, despite the strong opposition. One preacher declared "he'd rather his boys would go fishing than attend Sunday school."<sup>4</sup>

German material was used for both children and adults. The first Sunday school record book (1892) indicates the existence of fourteen classes (at least five being German), all conducted in the main auditorium.

The inconsistency of the belief that a successful farmer would make a good preacher was realized after the ordination of Peter B. Loux on June 9, 1896. Although a sincere Christian, Loux was not gifted in the art of speaking.

The rewards of the Sunday school were becoming evident in the spiritual life of the congregation. Prior to this, persons became members after marriage. But now interest was shown at a younger age. One fifteen-year-old asked her Sunday school teacher, Mrs. Abe Hunsicker, if she could join the brotherhood.

Many young people were led to Christ through the messages of a visiting minister, John S. Coffman. As a result, forty youth were baptized in the summer of 1896, including Mrs. Abe Hunsicker's class of girls, and again on January 31, 1897. Of these eighty new members seventy were unmarried.

Henry Rosenberger had been ordained as bishop in 1895, and in 1900 Henry G. Anglemoyer became the first regular English preacher.

Through the prayers of a missionary-minded Sunday school teacher who was confined to her sick bed, the first Sunday school in Perkasie was held on January 18, 1909, at the home of William M. Moyer. By the

<sup>3</sup> John C. Wenger, *History of the Mennonites of Franconia Conference* (Scottdale, Pa., Menn. Publishing House, 1937), p. 180.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

eighth of August a meetinghouse was completed and Bishop Rosenberger moved to Perkasie to direct the first mission endeavor of Blooming Glen Church.

With the installation of kerosene lights in 1911, Sunday evening services (held every four weeks) were introduced. These lights were later displaced by acetylene and still later by electric.

Upon obtaining the bishop's permission to invite evangelists from another conference, the first Bible-Instruction meetings were held from August 27 to September 2, 1911, by Daniel Kauffman and S. G. Shetler. It had been the practice of female members to keep their coverings at the meetinghouse and wear hats to and from the services. These hats were becoming too fancy; thus one of the main goals of these meetings was to restore the use of the bonnet, which in part was accomplished.

The first election of chorister occurred when Bishop Rosenberger called for a rising vote to elect Leidy D. Hunsicker, who since has made valuable contributions to the church's music.

The year 1914 brought the first young peoples' meetings at Perkasie Church, crowded with interested youth.

The spark of witnessing took hold throughout the conference and the forming of various organizations was the result of a fervent desire to share the Gospel.

One of these was the first sewing circle meeting held at the home of Mrs. William M. Moyer on March 13, 1915. Through the labor of these devoted women, needy in the community as well as throughout the world have seen Christian love in action.

Frank Swartz, ordained at Blooming Glen in 1908, served on a committee in 1917 to start a Mission Board in the Franconia Conference.

In 1918 William M. Moyer's Sunday school class sent two hundred dollars to India for the construction of a home for native workers. Mahlon C. Lapp, bishop in India, writes, "We were very much pleased to get your letter, and good for your Sunday school class, that is the way to do business for the Lord, and I am sure that he will reward you and the class."<sup>5</sup> This was only the beginning of extensive support of missionaries by Sunday school classes of all ages.

Joseph Gross was ordained on November 26, 1918, and served the congregation until his death in 1921.

Blooming Glen was opposed to college training until they saw the fruitfulness of a young member's life

after attending Goshen College for a few years. After college, Clayton Kratz volunteered to do relief work among the starving Russian Mennonites. Shortly after he arrived in the Ukraine, Communism spread to this area and he was taken prisoner and became a martyr to his faith.

Wilson R. Moyer, ordained on July 5, 1921, played an active part in the conference as evangelist, trustee of Eastern Mennonite Home, and committee member for camp visitation and governmental contact during World War II.

Melvin A. Bishop, ordained on May 27, 1930, to share the pulpit with Wilson Moyer, drove a baker truck for a living. He later received the first offering for ministerial support.

Several new activities were started while Wilson Moyer and Melvin Bishop were ministers. Teachers' meetings were introduced in 1921.

An annex was added to the rear of the church in 1925. New features of this 50 x 84 foot building were a vestibule on the first floor and a balcony, where Bible study was held on Monday evenings (while the building was still warm from Sunday services).

William Detweiler went to Norristown in 1928 and Katie Richert to West Virginia in 1935 to aid in the forming of missions. An active mission program was also being carried on at home through the winter (1935) and summer (1946) Bible school programs.

In 1939 offerings were taken for the construction of the present large brick building with adequate classrooms and a seating capacity of one thousand.

The youth of the congregation in 1948 were eager to start an M. Y. F. Youth representatives met with the ministers and deacons to discuss the matter. Permission was granted on the conditions that activities would always be approved by the bench and the group be called Christian Workers Band rather than M. Y. F. The group was affiliated with the national M. Y. F., however, and soon became known as Blooming Glen Mennonite Youth Fellowship. John Grasse, Jr., the first president, proved to be a capable leader and good organizer.

One of the first projects to grow out of this organization was the establishment of a mission outpost at Bridgewater Corners, Vermont, in 1952. The Lloyd Moyer, Howard Kulp, and Wilmer Schmell families moved to this area and Blooming Glen assumed the support of a minister.

A few changes were made in the form and order of worship services in 1949. The traditional introductory sermon and testimony following the sermon were discontinued.

Weekly Sunday morning services took the place of bi-weekly services.

There was some friction between the members of the congregation in the late forties. Several discontented families left the church to worship with the founders of the Calvary Mennonite Church.

Paul Lederach, ordained for Norristown in January 1951, came to Blooming Glen (until 1953) to aid in healing the hurt feelings which arose from these differing views. During Lederach's ministry, several changes were made in the administration and organization of the church. A quarterly workers' meeting was innovated and a board of five trustees elected. Once again there was harmony among the brotherhood and some who had left returned to their home church.

David Derstine, a graduate of Goshen College, was ordained in 1951, after returning from Belgium, and is still serving as pastor today. Pastoral support of the home pastor was adopted by the congregation in the same year and a parsonage was built two years later.

#### Conclusion

Today the Blooming Glen Mennonite Church is the second largest in the conference, with an average Sunday school attendance of 499. The congregation is composed of 160 families including doctors, teachers, psychiatrists, farmers, businessmen, and general employees. At present, ten couples have already celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversaries.

A library containing over 1100 books is available for the use of young and old alike.

Opportunities for Christian fellowship and service are provided for all age groups through organizations which have sprung up in the church in recent years. A Wayfarers' and a Torchbearers' Club are sponsored by interested parents to help children recognize service opportunities. A Disaster Unit stands by to aid in rehabilitation during such misfortunes as floods and fires.

From the Junior Sewing Circle (1936) a Homemakers' group was organized in 1958. This group of active mothers has reflected Christian love to many, through letter writing and giving birthday gifts to missionaries, providing hot meals for needy families, financially aiding children's homes, and numerous other projects. They meet once a month to discuss and exchange ideas related to the role of a Christian mother.

Once a month men, women, and youth visit the Allentown State Hospital. A group from Blooming Glen was the first to start this project in 1957 at the invitation of Bucks County Mental Health Society.

(Continued on Page 8)

<sup>5</sup> Personal letter from Mahlon Cassius Lapp, Bishop in India, to William M. Moyer, December 23, 1918.

### HISTORY OF BLOOMING GLEN MENNOMITE CHURCH

(Continued from Page 7)

Recently a Women's Council has been organized and meets semi-annually to discuss problems arising in the women's groups of the church.

The M. Y. F. program, under the supervision of adults who are young in heart, is a great influence in molding the lives of the church leaders of tomorrow. The youth group is steadily increasing in number (approximately 70 at present—1962). Such experiences as the Youth Weekend in the summer and the Black Rock Retreat in the fall of 1961 have strengthened the unity and individual Christian lives of these young people.

Various singing groups have arisen from time to time in the congregation, including an M. Y. F. Chorus. Two more permanent groups, the men's quartette and girls' trio, have been serving Christ by singing in churches throughout the conference.

One of the most influential factors in the growth and life of this church is its mission program. Blooming Glen has felt the urgency of the call to spread the Gospel, as can be seen by the mission budget of \$27,560 during the past year. At present there are at least thirty members in mission work (plus several who have transferred their membership), and many serving in PAX, I-W, under MCC, and as teachers or administrators in Mennonite schools.

Souderton, Pa.

### Book Review

*War and the Gospel.* By Jean Lasserre, Herald Press, Scottdale, Pa., 1962. Pp. 243. \$3.75.

Most books on pacifism (or non-resistance or conscientious objection to war) are simply restatements of the beliefs and applications that have long been associated with this Christian conviction. *War and the Gospel* however derives from the personal study and spiritual insight of a pastor in the Reformed Church in France. These convictions are achieved without substantial borrowing from Anglo-Saxon thought and for this reason have an incisiveness and freshness that is notably different from most books treating this subject.

This is the most penetrating book to appear for many years on the subject of the Christian and modern war. It is a thrilling testimony to the ecumenical nature of Christian truth that it should be published by the Mennonites yet be written by a French Reformed minister. It is an-

other case to add to those of Bonhoeffer's book on discipleship and Barth's on believer's baptism. We have come to see that the unity of truth is emerging without regard to ecclesiastical and doctrinal traditions. Some of our doctrinal "distinctives" are becoming less and less denominational.

Herald Press is to be most warmly commended for providing an American edition of this book. It is particularly noteworthy in light of the fact that this book seriously challenges many of the usual understandings we have had concerning nonresistance. The author early expresses a dislike for the word *non-resistance* and suggests "we . . . rather talk of nonviolent action or even nonviolent resistance; for the nonviolence of the Gospels never implies acquiescence in evil." Lasserre hopes that someone better qualified than he "will work out in detail this technique of nonviolent resistance, in the light of Gandhi's experience." He takes no categorical position concerning the possibility of a nonviolent Christian being a policeman and he makes a most discerning differentiation between police and military service. Also contrary to our usual position, this author states that "the objector will take part in the defense of his country by non-violent resistance." He holds furthermore that self-defense is legitimate in the sight of God when it is not murderous and in answering the stock question, "Would you defend your wife if she were criminally attacked?" he answers "Of course I should; and if I only needed to knock him out, I shouldn't hesitate." The American Mennonite reader begins to wonder as he reads this book whether our concepts and practices have not come largely from the ivory towers of an extremely tolerant democracy.

The writer is clear but he is not easy to read. This reader finished with the feeling that the first third of the book could have much better been the close. The author proceeds throughout with relentless logic. There is much, perhaps too much, use of irony and sarcasm to be as winsome as he should be. This book speaks most pointedly to the sophisticated intellectual though it is a question how willingly he will take the trouncing he receives at Lasserre's hands. But he will never again be able to share so glibly the ponderous rationalizations that the great theologians have been handing out on these issues through the years.

I have never encountered before such perspective discussions on the priority of the State or the legitimacy of capital punishment or the

significance of the sixth commandment. The centrality of the Cross is also treated with a depth seldom encountered. There are interpretations incidental to the main theme which, as John Howard Yoder says so kindly in the Preface, "one would wish to discuss further," but these take a subordinate place in light of the fact that here is a man who still believes that morality matters.

The book has a few minor faults such as the rather frequent typographical errors, and that unfortunate economizing that puts the 303 footnotes somewhere other than at the bottom of the page where footnotes belong! There is also a complete lack of an index of subjects, names, etc., and only an aggravatingly brief Biblical reference index.

Gerald Studer  
Scottdale, Pa.

### Mennonite Research News and Notes

MELVIN GINGERICH

Peter Brock, author of *The Political and Social Doctrines of the Unity of Czech Brethren in the 15th and Early 16th Centuries* is doing research in the Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College on a history of pacifism. He will be working in the Goshen College Historical Library during the summer months.

A. E. Goertz is compiling a Mennonite bibliography of Prussia to be published in the yearbook "Kirche des Ostens" in 1963 under the title "Bibliographie zur Geschichte der Mennoniten Altpreussens."

J. A. Toews, Winnipeg, Manitoba, has chosen as his dissertation topic Sebastian Franck and the Anabaptists.

Willis Stoesz wrote a B.D. thesis at Union Theological Seminary, New York, in 1958 on "The New Creature: Menno Simons' Understanding of Faith." He is now working towards a doctorate at Union and at Columbia University, with a dissertation on "Anabaptist Origins: A Study of Thomas Müntzer, Hans Denck and Hans Hut."

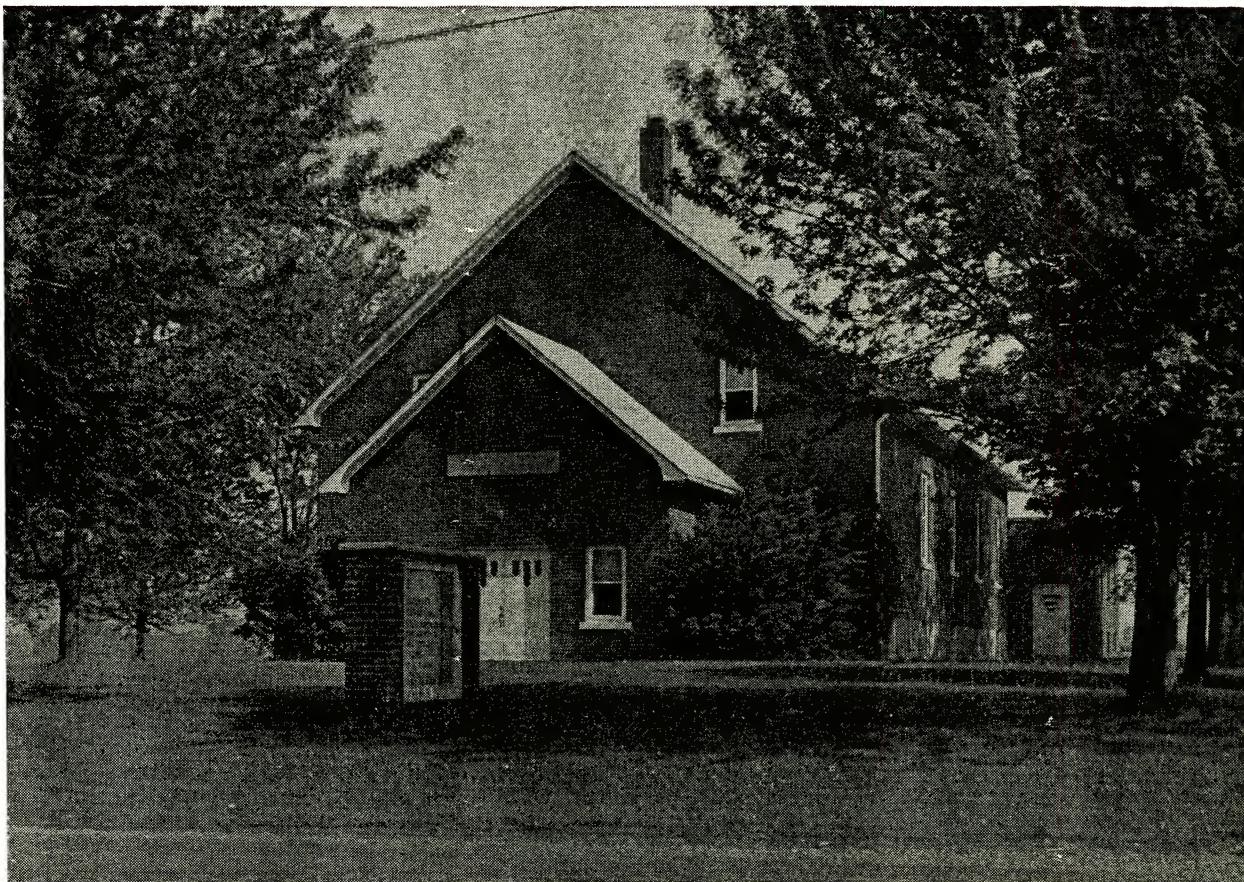
Professor John C. Wenger has prepared a manuscript on "The Church Nurtures Faith 1863-1963" to be published as a book this year by the Herald Press, Scottdale, Pa. The book is being published in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the first permanent Mennonite Sunday School by the predecessor of the South Union Mennonite Church, West Liberty, Ohio, in June 1863.

# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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No. 3



CLARENCE CENTER MENNONITE CHURCH

On July 14, 1963, the Clarence Center Mennonite Church, two miles north and one and one-half miles east of Clarence in western New York celebrates the fortieth anniversary of its establishment as a congregation. The church pictured above was dedicated on May 30, 1937.

## Clarence Center Mennonite Church

MARJORIE YODER WIDEMAN

On July 14, 1963, the congregation at Clarence Center, New York, will be celebrating its fortieth anniversary. From a charter membership of 36 in 1923 it has grown to a congregation of 187 members. This growth has been due largely to the influx of families from many states during the 1923-35 period. Starting from a completely agricultural constituency, today only a small percentage of the members are engaged in farming. The church is located on Clarence Center Road between Clarence Center and Akron, about fifteen miles east of Buffalo and is a member of the Ontario Mennonite Conference.

Late in the fall of 1920 several families from Lagrange, Indiana, moved to western New York. After World War I employment was hard to find in the middle west, market prices were very low, and land was expensive. A very ambitious land agent by the name of Frank Horning greatly promoted this movement of Mennonites to the Akron-Lockport region. Although the land was very expensive, weather conditions were favorable, the agricultural ground was of the best type, and there was an excellent market for fruits, vegetables and other farm produce in near-by Buffalo. There was also op-

portunity for non-farmers to secure employment in mills and factories in the vicinity.

The first families who settled here were Ammon Mast, Elmer Murray, Sam S. Meyer, Joseph Schrock, Eli Frey, and Joni Yoder. At first the group met in the home of Elmer Murray for Sunday school and fellowship. Occasionally there were visiting members from Ontario who met with the group. After meeting in homes for a number of months, the Swift Mills schoolhouse was used and then an old house on the Sam Meyer farm.

On May 28, 1922, the group, under the leadership of L. J. Burkholder, a representative of the Rural Mission Board of the Ontario Conference, organized a Sunday school. It was decided that meetings should be held every two weeks and two lessons

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## CLARENCE CENTER

(Continued from Page 1)

should be taught on one Sunday since there was usually no preaching service. The attendance varied from 28 to 58 during that summer, largely due to the many visitors who came to investigate the possibilities of moving here. During this time meetings were held in a rented Lutheran church on the Akron-Lockport Road near Lockport, New York.

In the summer of 1923, the congregation had its first pastor, Irvin E. Burkhardt of Floradale, Ontario, who had been ordained in 1922, and who was attending school at Hesston, was placed as a summer pastor. It was during this time, on July 15, 1923, under the direction of L. J. Burkholder and Moses Shantz, President of the Ontario Mennonite District Mission Board, that the church was officially organized as a congregation and was known as The Mennonite Congregation of Western New York. Eli Kauffman, who had moved here from Duchess, Alberta, served as deacon. By now meetings were being held every Sunday. The charter members included thirteen families making a total of 36 members. Three of these, Anna Martin, Homer Hoover and Mrs. John Sherck, had been members of the Good congregation, a previous Mennonite congregation in the Clarence Center area. The rest of the families migrated from Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Alberta, Pennsylvania and North Dakota.

The year of 1924 showed both spiritual and numerical progress in the congregation. Bishop C. F. Dertstine held revival meetings here from March 21 to 28. These meetings were held at the River Brethren Church in Clarence Center. The visible results were six confessions. On April 6, 1924, Young People's Bible Meeting was organized. By June, when Irvin Burkhardt again returned as summer pastor, twenty families were living here. On August 24, 1924, in a meeting led by Mose Shantz, the congregation decided to discontinue the use of the church near Gasport and to rent the Sand Hill Community Building which was much nearer Clarence Center, where the larger majority of the Mennonite people had settled. The first meeting was held there on September 7, 1924, with I. E. Burkhardt preaching at both the morning and evening services. This was his last day with the congregation as he returned to Hesston that night. Once again the group was without a min-

ister, but the Ontario Mission Board sent over a minister every second or third Sunday.

In March of 1926, Chris L. Ressler, with his family, moved here from Tuleta, Texas. He had been ordained in 1907 to serve at the Yellow Creek Church near Elkhart, Indiana. He was welcomed as a minister and was the first resident minister in the congregation, serving from 1926 until the spring of 1929 when he moved back to Indiana. From an average attendance of 39 at the Sunday school meetings in 1923, the attendance jumped to 140 by 1926. This total was swelled by the many visitors in the community. On October 10, 1926, Sunday school records show 28 visitors present.

As early as 1926 some of the women of the church met together to make comforters and clothing for needy families. According to records the first official organization of a Sewing Circle was on April 25, 1928, at the home of Mrs. Ora Kauffman. At this time Mrs. Jacob Birk was elected the first president.

Up until this time the Western New York congregation had been under the control of the Ontario Mission Board. In 1928 the congregation was reorganized as being independent of the Mission Board, and S. F. Coffman of Vineland, Ontario, was appointed bishop. Ira Yoder moved here in 1926 from Surrey, North Dakota, and was accepted as deacon of the church. At this time the name of the Sand Hill Congregation was also adopted.

Early in 1928, Daniel D. Kauffman moved here from Kalispel, Montana. He had been ordained to the ministry in 1885. He worked together with C. L. Ressler during 1928 and after the Ressler family moved, early in 1929, he served as resident minister. In 1930 because of poor health and declining age, Kauffman moved to his home community of South English, Iowa.

Once more the congregation was without a minister. It was decided to select one from the congregation to be chosen by lot. Five men were nominated for the lot, with Jacob Birk being chosen. He was ordained on December 14, 1930, by Bishop S. F. Coffman and minister Mose Shantz. The church attendance and membership, although always changing, had by 1934 an enrollment of 310 and a membership of 171.

At this time many young people from the midwestern states came to New York in search of employment

and good wages. There had always been a demand for Mennonite girls to work as maids in the wealthy homes in Buffalo. They were preferred above others because of their willingness to work, their ability to be good housekeepers and cooks, and their trustworthiness. The young men found employment in factories and mills and in several local sand and gravel companies. Most of these young people never transferred their membership here, but over the years had made a real contribution to the life and growth of the church.

Although people had come together from many different congregations and from many states, the members got along exceptionally well and the church prospered. The members did not live together in a close community, some of them living as far as fifty miles from the church. Many others lived from ten to twenty miles away and it took real effort and consecration to attend services regularly and take part in church activities. Many of the younger members went to the city to work and after 1935 a number of the young men of the church left, either marrying outside the church or becoming engrossed with other interests.

By 1936 it was apparent that the small Sand Hill church building could no longer accommodate the increased enrollment. After a number of ballots and some apparent dissatisfaction over location, it was decided to build a new church on a plot of land located on the Clarence Center Road about four miles east of Clarence Center. Excavations were begun in the fall of 1936. The new brick veneer building with a capacity of four hundred people was completed and dedicated on May 30, 1937. By vote of the congregation the church now became known as the Clarence Center Mennonite church.

With increased membership the constituency felt that it should have more ministerial help, in the form of a resident bishop. Up to this time bishop appointments had been made by the Ontario Conference and the congregation was often visited only at communion time. By 1938 action was taken to secure a resident minister who could be ordained to the office of bishop. Burton Weber, who had recently moved to Kitchner, Ontario, from Guernsey, Saskatchewan was recommended for this office.

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## CLARENCE CENTER

(Continued from Page 2)

The recommendation was accepted and in November of 1939, after a long wait because of complications in the immigration laws, he and his family moved to the community. On November 5, 1939, in the presence of five hundred people, he was ordained to the office of Bishop, with S. F. Coffman, C. F. Derstine, S. M. Kanagy and B. B. Shantz in charge.

Church attendance rose and a renewed spirit of good will and spirituality prevailed. During the next two years new church organizations were started. A literary society under the name of Clarence Center Christian Crusaders was organized to meet social needs of the young people. A church cabinet was established with the ministry and twelve delegates from the church working together on church policy and general planning. At this time a new church membership roll was drawn up and accepted. In May, 1942, Jacob Birk was released by the congregation to accept a call to the pastorate at Britton Run, Pennsylvania.

During the years between 1942 and 1945 nearly a dozen families either moved out of the community or left the church. A period of stress and strain had entered the church during which time many were unhappy with the ministerial organization and a feeling of ill will crept into the fellowship of the constituency. This migration depleted considerably the size of the congregation, especially because of the large number of children represented in these families.

Because of the difficult situation and the apparent dissatisfaction, the Ontario Conference limited Bishop Weber in his ministerial duties and in 1944 appointed Mose Roth of Ontario as acting bishop. Dean Bender of Goshen College was contacted concerning the availability of a seminary student. D. Edward Diener, a student who was about to graduate and who had already been ordained in Yoder, Kansas, in 1942, was recommended. He began to make visits to Clarence Center in the spring of 1944. In June 1944, he and his wife moved to the community. Burton Weber returned to Ontario early in 1946.

Edward Deiner immediately became active in building up and organizing the church once more. There was much rebuilding to be done in the fellowship and spirituality of the church. He also stepped into a situation which necessitated almost complete responsibility of the church, since Ira Yoder, the deacon, had been fatally injured in an automobile accident on March

15, 1944. Mose Roth, the acting bishop, was only occasionally able to be with the congregation. In 1946, Alvin Jantzi was chosen by lot to serve as deacon.

During Pastor Deiner's nineteen years of service the church has prospered. Under his leadership, early in his pastorate, a church constitution was drawn up and accepted. Since then it has been revised to meet the current needs of the congregation. In 1949 a Church Council was inaugurated through which the work of the church is planned and evaluated. Both Mr. and Mrs. Deiner through the years have been interested in the work of the young people and were able to guide the transition from the Literary Society to an active MYF group. In 1950 a Homemaker's Fellowship was organized. More recently a Married Couple's Fellowship and a Men's Fellowship have also been organized. A Summer Bible School has been held annually since 1938. At the present time a committee is studying the possibilities of a planned giving program.

On December 8, 1958, a dedication service for the newly completed church annex was held. The annex includes sewing rooms, library, Sunday school rooms, kitchen and large social room.

In 1948, A. L. Fretz of Selkirk, Ontario, became acting bishop. On May 29, 1955, Pastor Diener was ordained to the office of bishop with J. B. Martin and A. L. Fretz in charge of the service. He also has bishop oversight of the Arcade, New York, congregation.

Bishop Diener has been active in local inter-church, community relations. He has been a member of the Clarence-Newstead Ministerial Association for twelve years. A four member delegate body from the church serves on the Akron Area Inter-Church Fellowship. He has served on the Ontario Bible School Board for sixteen years.

Active in church member visitation, Bishop Diener visits regularly in the homes, and encourages his members in a personal way to deeper spiritual growth. At the present time the Sunday school has an enrollment of 269 and there are 187 church members.

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## Clarence Amish Mennonite Church

ANNIE EICHORN

The Clarence, New York, Conservative Amish Mennonite Church, now extinct, was organized in December 1921 by Christian Nafziger of Lewis Co., N. Y., with Lewis Eichorn as the minister. The settlers came from different parts of the United States and Canada. During the first few years services were held at the Sandhill Church, later at the old Stone Mennonite Church, and still later at the Lewis Eichorn home. In 1929 the church was reorganized by John A. Stoltzfus, Lancaster Co., Pa., but not under a conference. In November 1934 Joseph Roth was ordained to the ministry by John A. Stoltzfus. Some years later the Pine City schoolhouse, two miles from Clarence, was bought for a meetinghouse, and was generally known as the Eichorn Church. Many members moved away. Lewis Eichorn died on Feb. 17, 1945. Services were held until March 14, 1948; at that time nine members were left.

(From the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol. I, p. 618.)

## Clarence Center

J. C. FRETZ

Clarence Center, a village 30 miles east of Buffalo, N. Y., was the location of two Mennonite churches now extinct. The Good's Stone Church and cemetery was the first and belonged to the Mennonite Conference of Ontario. The Cox cemetery, a mile nearer Clarence Center, marks the location for the place of worship of a General Conference Mennonite group organized under Jacob Krehbiel, Jr. (1835-1917). He was a son of Deacon Frederick Krehbiel (1806-63) and grandson of Bishop Jacob Krehbiel (1780-1860), who came to Erie Co., N. Y., from Germany. Jacob, Jr., was ordained to the ministry under the Mennonite Conference of Ontario in 1872. He married Leah Strickler in 1866, daughter of Preacher John Strickler. Several families bearing the names of Eberhart, Lehman, Lapp, Ritz, Rhoades, Frick, Leib, Martin, Hummel, Sherrill, and Roth affiliated with the General Conference Mennonites about 1880. Sometime after organization, their worship services were held every two weeks in Clarence Center in a church rented from the United Brethren. After Jacob Krehbiel became inactive, these services were discontinued and the organization ceased. Descendants of these families have become members of local non-Mennonite churches.

(From the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol. I, p. 618.)

## The John Freed Family of Columbiana County

WILMER D. SWOPE

In 1808 the John Freed family settled in western Columbiana County, Ohio, then near the Stark County line. This family was responsible for the organization of a Mennonite church in West Township, 1820-1825. A son Joseph was minister and leader of the Mennonite church in Richland County, Ohio.

The father of John Freed, Jacob Freed, Sr., embarked at Rotterdam, Holland, landing at Philadelphia, Pa., Sept. 23, 1752, married Elizabeth Heffletrager and settled in Richland Township, Bucks County, Pa., near Quakertown. Jacob, Sr. is buried at "Drissels" meetinghouse, now the East Swamp church in Milford Township, Bucks County, Pa. There were three known children—Mary, John, and Jacob, Jr.

Mary Freed married Christian Moyer who originated a very large, good cooking apple named "Moyer Sweets." John Freed married Elizabeth Newcomer, the aunt of preacher Jacob Newcomer of West Township, Columbiana County, Ohio.

Jacob Freed, Jr. was called Yokel Freed to distinguish him from his nephew Jacob, the son of John. John Freed's son Jacob was called Butter Yokel because it was his daily chore to bring home the cows.

The two brothers John and Jacob settled in Rockingham County, Va., about thirty miles south of the falls of Bull Run. Becoming dissatisfied they moved to Westmoreland County, Pa., about 1803 and settled along Jacobs Creek. Summer freshets often destroyed part of their crops when the grain was cut and in bundles. These freshets would carry the bundles away, with the Freed children enjoying the spectacle much more than their parents. In 1808 John Freed and family followed other non-Mennonite families who had gone to West Township, Columbiana County, Ohio, in 1805 and before from Westmoreland County.

The Freeds traveled in a western schooner wagon pulled by four horses. They spent many restless nights in camp caused by the snapping, snarling and howling of the wolves. They crossed the Ohio River on a ferry boat at Pittsburgh. Major, their black dog, swam to the boat and jumped in, causing the boat to sink. Part of the cattle broke loose and jumped overboard, whereupon the dog was driven off. Both he and the cattle made it to the Ohio side of the river. John Freed took a patent for 159 acres of the northwest quarter of section 14 of West Township and entered the

patent at Steubenville, Ohio, under the credit system.<sup>1</sup>

In appearance John Freed was five and a half feet in height, slender, and had black hair, grey eyes, and a long pointed nose. He was of a brave and determined disposition. Born to John and Elizabeth Freed were children Barbara, Henry, John, Nancy and Peter in Virginia, Jacob, Joseph, and Elizabeth in Pennsylvania. John Freed, Sr., was an earnest member of the Mennonite church. It was his influence that led to the organization of the Mennonite Church in West Township, Columbiana County, by Bishop Jacob Nold of Fairfield Township, Columbiana County. Bishop Nold was formerly (prior to coming to Ohio), the bishop at John Freed's boyhood church, East Swamp in Bucks County, Pa. Freed exercised great discipline in his family. Time was told by an hour glass which John never permitted anyone but himself to handle. John Freed died in 1825. A portion of his will gives evidence of his religious sincerity, "I commend my soul into the hands of Almighty God my creator. Hoping for free pardon and remindfull of all my sin and to enjoy everlasting happiness in the heavenly kingdom through Jesus Christ my saviour, my body I commend to the earth." The wearing apparel of Freed is listed in the chattels inventory as follows; 1 roundabout vest coat and pantaloons, 1 roundabout and 5 vests, 1 pair pantaloons, 2 straight bodied coats, and 1 great coat.<sup>2</sup> John Freed, Sr. was buried in a black walnut coffin coated with beeswax. The coffin was without handles, so was carried by six men on three hand-spikes to the cemetery at New Alexander. The Freeds, John, Sr. and Elizabeth, lie in unmarked graves in the New Alexander Cemetery.

### The Children of John Freed

1. Barbara married Joseph Messimore, lived in West Township.
2. Henry married Rebecca Crowl. Their children
  - a. John married Leah Dubbs, and moved to Hancock County, Ohio. John was a deacon in the Mennonite church and his son Peter a preacher in the Brethren church in Hancock County.
  - b. Malinda married James Coyle (1826-1906), Mennonite minister in Dekalb County, Indiana.<sup>3</sup>
  - c. Elizabeth married Jacob Newcomer who was born in

York County, Pa., moved to Westmoreland County, with his parents. Jacob Newcomer was a Mennonite minister in West Township, Columbiana County, Ohio, the donor of the site for the Mennonite Church which was built in or before 1858 and was razed in 1932.

3. John married Maria Whittenberger, a Catholic. She renounced the Catholic faith and joined the Mennonite church. They settled in the Mennonite community in Franklin County, Ohio, near Columbus.
4. Nancy married March 15, 1821, her first cousin Jacob Freed, son of Jacob and Mary Freed. Jacob the III was an excellent cabinet maker. Jacob and Nancy lived in Paint Township, Holmes County, Ohio, near Winesburg. He had a good orchard grown from seed which he brought with him from Pennsylvania. Nancy died in 1834. In 1837 Jacob was ordained minister and in 1851 moved to Locke Township, Elkhart County, Indiana.
5. Peter married Hannah Miller of Quaker background.
6. Jacob married Harriet Jennings and joined the Disciples Church.
7. Joseph married Hannah Snyder. He was a minister in the Mennonite church, ordained in Columbiana County. They moved to Richland County, nine miles west of Mansfield, Ohio, where he served the small Mennonite church until his death.<sup>4</sup> Joseph's son Daniel (1830-1897) was a deacon in the Holdeman Mennonite church in Indiana.
8. Elizabeth married Jacob Smith, one of the Mennonite ministers in West Township, Columbiana County, Ohio.

### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Vol. 10, page 447. Finding his patent faulty it was corrected later, Vol. 21, page 383.

<sup>2</sup> Columbiana County, Ohio, Probate Court Records Docket No. 749.

<sup>3</sup> *The Mennonites in Indiana and Michigan*, J. C. Wenger, page 273; see James Coyle.

<sup>4</sup> *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1, page 733; see Crawford-Richland Counties. Also see *The Mennonites in Indiana and Michigan*, J. C. Wenger, page 276, Daniel Freed.

Unless otherwise noted most of the information contained in this article is taken from a book entitled *Francis E. Shaw and Relatives* with other matter published by F. E. Shaw in 1921 at Garrettsville, Ohio. F. E. Shaw spent much time tramping by foot over West Township gathering historical material. Shaw ran a second hand store in Garrettsville. In a back room on the second floor he had his own printing press on which he printed a number of books, among which was the one noted above, and also a history of Ohio.

## The 1824 Colony at Clarence Center

J. C. FRETZ

In 1824 a colony of Mennonites from Lancaster Co., Pa., among them the Leibs, Lehmans, Sherers, and Martins, settled around Clarence Center, New York. It is reported that Johannes Roth of Lancaster County settled in Erie County south of Clarence Center early in the latter half of the 18th century. Their first minister was Jacob Lapp, who, according to Hartzler-Kauffman records, came in 1828. John Martin was the first deacon (Cassel, 169). In 1831 Jacob Krehbiel, a Mennonite minister, moved in from Germany. He became bishop in 1839. His son Frederick and Abraham Leib were ordained deacons with the growth of the congregation. They soon built a stone church (no longer standing) a few miles west of Clarence Center, known as Good's Church. The congregation prospered both by immigration and by accessions. John Lapp (1798-1878) became minister in 1828 and bishop about ten years later. Peter Lehman and Abram Lapp were also ordained ministers. Jacob Krehbiel, Jr., became minister in 1872 but withdrew about 1875, and affiliated with the General Conference Mennonites. Jacob Hahn, father of Sarah Lapp, missionary to India, became minister in 1866. *The Herald of Truth* in 1872 reported German Sunday school and services held here every Sunday. John Strickler, of the Miller Church near Clarence, later identified himself with this flock. When John Lapp became inactive the church dwindled and with the loss of the Krehbiel followers became very weak. The Ontario Conference supplied the ministers for a number of years until about 1920, when new families moving in from various states gave rise to a revived congregation in a more easterly location. The Good cemetery is still the burying ground for the Clarence Center congregation.

(From the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol. I, pp. 618-19.)

Several months preceding his death, Dr. J. E. Hartzler donated his personal papers and correspondence to the Goshen College Biblical Seminary. The material consisting of twenty letter file boxes is now housed in the Archives of the Mennonite Church.

Grant M. Stoltzfus spent part of June working in the Archives of the Mennonite Church on his history of the Ohio and Eastern Mennonite Conference.

## An Old Letter

Kalona, Washington Co., Iowa, Feb. 3, 1908 — My rusty and unskilled pen is again aroused from its long slumber, by our friend, John Horsch, of Birmingham, Ohio, who in a few recent articles in the *Budget* spoke of "Inconsistency" and Old Documents.

I will say I have in my possession a number of old documents, the oldest one being the one of which he speaks in his article namely "Abredder Diener und Aeltesten aus Vielen Orten, zu Strasburg in 1568." This however, with others, has laterly been given to print by Wm. Yoder, of Nappanee, Ind., in pamphlet form, which could be much enlarged by adding other documents of like nature in my possession.

I have one from the year 1779, drawn in the city of Landau, which denounces and prohibits the tobacco habit, both in smoking and snuffing. The habit of chewing tobacco was perhaps not yet in vogue in those days. I fully agree with these old documents in this regard and also with what friend Horsch has said in regard to inconsistency, and reminds me of what occurred several years ago one frosty morning as I drove to town, when a friend drove in the same barn as I did. After a greeting and hearty handshake and usual remarks about the cold weather we prepared to go up town and so doing he pitched out a chew of tobacco and took in a new one, perhaps without noticing it himself; when ready to go, I remarked that he still had some brown ice in his beard (which was turning grey from old age,) he answered; "ah, I guess I would better cut my head off and throw it away," when I tried to answer emphatically, No, but you had better quit using that nasty stuff—"Inconsistency".

Some perhaps are ready to say that "the freedom of using tobacco and the moderate use of strong drink is part of the Amish principle, my grandfather and even great-grandfather have indulged in its use." Well I will not dispute this, but it has not been tolerated at all times nor by all persons at any time. It may be part of your "Amish principle," but not mine, nor of Christ's and his Apostles, who have taught us total abstinence of all filthiness, excesses and intemperance.

I for one am not exceedingly proud of the name Amish; this name having been given one division of Mennonites ironically by their opponents at a time of the great strife and schism in the Mennonite churches in Switzerland, and more or less through all Europe; not so much because this branch approved of all the hasty doings of Jacob Ammon

for they disapproved some of his hasty deeds and caused him to repent and recall them, but this branch approved and held to the church doctrines as upheld by Jacob Ammon and were therefore called Amish Mennonites.

There is a little Pamphlet printed in the german language "Eine Begebenheit," containing spaltungs "Briefe" pertaining to the above schism, which could also be greatly enlarged by adding other spaltungs Briefe of Jacob Ammon and others of his contemporaries on both sides, of which I also have copies in my possession.

I am at a loss in deciding whether these manuscripts had better been Preserved and even put in print, or whether they had better been buried in the same coffin with their originator. We can read these writings in two ways; the right way is according to Paul's advice — I Thes. 5:21-22 — "Proving all things and holding fast that which is Good;" we may be able to profit by the teachings and mistakes of these men, who have their rewards, but if we take sides as we are prone to do, it will be like opening and irritating an old wound, from which no good can come.

Besides these documents and manuscripts, I have in my possessions some old church histories, among which are the following "Johan August Stark's Geschichte der Taufe und Taufsgesinten," printed 1789. "Fliedners Buch der Martirer." "Hollberg's Kirchen geschichte," 5 volumes. 1712. "Schroeck's Kirechen geschichte," 10 volumes, 1812. "Ruer's Zustand der Menoniten," 1743. The oldest book I have is "Bekentniss der Waffen und Wehrlosen Christen," printed 1664.

I have never read and don't expect to ever read all that these numerous volumes contain. I only try to find matters concerning those of our faith, and then I get tired and often disgusted, as I take no delight in reading about church strife and contests; we don't know when we have the solemn truth, each side is inclined or prone to magnify the faults and shortcomings of their opponents and diminish and under estimate their virtues, so that I often lay them aside and turn to the Bible, the book of books; the only true book, always true; the book that teaches us to not render evil for evil to any man; to love our neighbor as ourself, yea to love our enemies. O how sweet and elevating are its doctrines.

(Perhaps written by J. F. Swartzendruber or S. D. Guengerich.)

From the *Budget*, Sugar Creek, Ohio, Feb. 20, 1908.

## Two Mementos

D. H. BENDER

My father, John Bender, was the only son in a family of five children born to grandfather, Daniel, and grandmother, Barbara (?) Bender. They lived on a small farm near the little village of Oberweimer, a few miles from the city of Marburg, Hesse Kassel, Germany.

Kaiser Wilhelm I was the ruler of Germany. The shrewd monarch owned a number of farms in the rich Rhine Valley. It was noted that these imperial farms were mostly operated by Mennonite tenants, who were considered among the best farmers in his realm.

One day a group of state churchmen (Reformed-Lutheran) called on the Kaiser in protest against his practice of renting his fine farms to these "odd" church people instead of to men of his own state church men. Among the points in their protest was the statement that these Mennonites had such a peculiar religious faith. To this the wily old Kaiser replied: "Ach, Lasz glauben was sie wollen, Nur dassz sie zahlen wan sie sollen." ("Let them believe what they would, just so they pay when they should.")

The Kaiser would frequently visit his farms, generally incognito, and during these visits he would mingle freely with the workers on his farms and others as well. Sometimes he would drop into the stores, shops and public schools. One day he visited the school where the Bender children attended. He was especially attracted to young Johannes Bender, who seemed to stand out above his classmates in the recitations; he even asked permission to ask the class some questions, directing them mostly to Johannes. After school he had rather a lengthy interview with the lad. After this, the Kaiser paid a number of visits to the Bender home. He noticed the exact and thorough manner in which the young man did his work.

When father was nineteen years of age the Kaiser hired him to take charge of a reclamation project on one of his Valley farms. In the neatly kept record book father called this work, "Auf Wisse Verbesserung," (meadow improvement). I remember among the men who worked on the project a number of Mennonite names—Kinsinger, Otto, Brenneman, Schwartzendruber, Schoettler, Mueller, etc.

The Kaiser seemed so well pleased with the service of father that the next year he made him "Verwalter" (Overseer) over one of his finest farms. To facilitate his movements about the estate, he presented him with a fine, high-spirited black pony, equipped with an expensive saddle,

bridle and a pair of silver spurs. I remember my father telling how the pony galloped friskily with him in making the rounds on the farm. These silver spurs are now in my possession and in good condition. I regret very much that in moving about the highly prized book in which father kept his records was lost.

Since father was employed by the Kaiser in 1850 and 1851, these spurs are nearly a century old. I trust they will fall in the hands of some member of the family who will appreciate them, or find their way into the Mennonite archives.<sup>1</sup> They could be made the subject of a bedtime story of a descendant telling his children of the prominence that their ancestor, great-great-great-grandfather attained in the Vaterland.

<sup>1</sup> Bender, D. H. "Two Mementos." *Mennonite Weekly Review*. Volume 22, Number 32, Newton, Kansas, August 10, 1944. Recently, Paul Bender, son of D. H. Bender, deposited this set of spurs with the Archives of the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana.

### Letter from Arkansas

From Arkansas.—Several families of the Amish brethren have opened a settlement in Arkansas Co., Arkansas, and have organized a meeting led by Pre. Jacob Yoder. They meet every two weeks. They are well satisfied with the country, which consists of fine prairie; and there is good timber not far away. The land is adapted to either farming or grazing. The St. Louis and Texas R. R. passes through the neighborhood and has three stations within ten miles; one being within two and a half miles of this settlement. Land Exploring tickets can be obtained at St. Louis at very low rates. The country is healthy. Bro. Carl Schultz, who writes us this information, says he has a large family, has lived there two years, and has not paid a single cent either for doctors or patent medicines. There is plenty of rainfall, and Bro. Schultz is well satisfied with his place. Brethren desiring to change locations are invited to examine this place. There are a number who have bought here, but have not yet been able to move on their places. Any one coming there, may inquire in Stuttgart for Jacob Yoder, Jos. Roth or Carl Schultz, and they will receive kind attention.

—Taken from the *Herald of Truth*, January 15, 1884, page 25.

The Western Reserve Historical Society in 1959 dedicated a room in its museum to the Amish, where an Amish exhibit is housed. The *Historical Society News*, which the Society publishes, had articles on the Amish in their December 1958 and January 1959 issues.

## The Dutch Had a Name for Him

RHODA BENDER

Your true Pennsylvania Dutchman has a flair for creating nicknames. Especially was this true several generations ago. The humorous, rugged individuals of that age, who called a spade a spade, did not hesitate to deal sobriquets they felt to be fitting, if not necessarily flattering. Today, if you find yourself intrigued by some spicy-sounding moniker, and get to wondering how its possessor came by it, just question someone of the older generation. He can usually give you the full story, with embellishments.

The appellations most favored by the Dutch seem to fall into three general classes: descriptive, distinguishing, and stigmatizing.

The first two are often used interchangeably, and tend to be based on the appearance, occupation, or habitation of the individual. The custom of giving nicknames of this type grew largely out of necessity. Among Pennsylvania's so-called "plain people" there is a marked tendency to choose first names from a limited number of Bible names. Here in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, we abound in Mennos, Simons, Sams, Johns, Annies, etc., used over and over with such family names as Yoder, Hershberger, Beachy, Miller, Maust, or Bender. To avoid utter confusion, some sort of additional designation has to be made. Sometimes just a middle initial will serve the purpose. It used to be customary for the son to use the initial letter of his father's first name, rather than the name itself. So we have such distinctions as Simon S. and Simon L., Jonas M. and Jonas E., Alvin J. and Alvin M., and the like. My grandfather, Daniel Miller, son of Joel, was known as Daniel J. His friend and neighbor, son of Peter Miller, was referred to as Dan P. But for some unknown reason the community tacked a like appendage to all of Dan P.'s children, so that they were called "Shorty" P., Savannah P., Freddie P., and Ruthie P.!

However, though the middle initial might be used for postal and business purposes, for ordinary identification far more interesting and original titles flourished. There was, for example, "Fuzzy John," so dubbed when his beard was in its infancy. There were "Wild Bill," "Chupsy John" and "Limpy Dick"; "Schay Cristlie" and "Dan Shackles"; "Long John" and "Dirty Tom"; "Schmidt Miller," the blacksmith; "Azie Yoder," the axemaker; and the three Yoder brothers, "Roxy," "Foxy," and "Doxy." Two men of portly build were respectively named

"Dhick Dan" and "Pussey Sam." "Sassafras John" was so styled because his mother casually gave birth to him under a sassafras tree on her way home from market! The famous wagoner, John Livengood, because of his handsome belled team, was known as "Bella Hans." "Posy Sam" Miller earned his nickname because of his interest in plants and flowers. "Piney" Shoemaker, noted hunter of squirrels, shared his appellation with most of his children, who were whimsically identified as "Till-Piney," "Oll-Piney," "Harve-Piney," and so on down the line. And down by the Casselman river lived the Amish patriarch, "Revver Pap" with his worthy mate, "Revver-Mam."

It was always a job keeping the various Annies, Miller, Yoder, and Bender straight; so some of them just had to be nick-named. For instance, we had "Annie-Rooney," "Arbutus Annie," "Annie L", and "Ed-Annie." The custom of tagging a married woman with her husband's name, in hyphenated fashion, is one that seemed to originate and flower in our part of the country. In addition to Ed-Annie, we also had "Milt-Kate," "Gid-Ketty," "Alie-Ket" and "Coon-Ketty." (All Conrads are known as "Coon" in these parts), not to mention "Henner-Lyt."

But the Pennsylvania Dutchman is at his best when dealing out titles with a stigma or touch of mockery attached. Here his grim, salty sense of humor has full play. He is likely to be long-suffering when injured, and not retaliate. But in a subtle way he sometimes gets his revenge. He may wish on the offender a nickname that suggests his misdeeds, and that may cling to him for the rest of his life. For example, a certain farmer who was wont to take shots at his neighbor's pigeons when they visited his barn, became known as "Dauva-Henner" (Dove-Henry) as an eternal reminder of his unneighborliness. A man suspected of shrewd business dealings was likely to have a "Yankee" attached to his name. Levi was much given to testifying in church, so, he gained the title of "Heilich Levi," probably more in mockery than respect.

But one of our most unique nicknames grew out of an involved deal between two farmers. It seems that Crist sold John a horse which John later discovered to be blind in one eye. John got even by selling Crist a cow whose fourth milk spigot was on the blink. Crist then relieved his disgruntled feelings by dubbing his friend "Drei-Ditzich John" (three-teated John), a derisive title that he carried for years.

Yes, the Dutchman can always find a name for you. So if you live

in Somerset County, you had better watch your step. If you stray, someone may label you with a nickname that will keep green, for several generations, the memory of your little fall from grace.

—Taken from *The Casselman Chronicle* (The Springs Historical Society of the Casselman Valley, Springs, Pennsylvania) Vol 1, No. 4, December, 1961, p. 10-11.

## The Christian B. Steiner Mennonite Church

MELVIN GINGERICH

Christian B. Steiner was born near Orrville, Wayne County, Ohio, November 29, 1825, the son of Ulrich and Barbara Steiner of Alsace. They came to America in 1825, after which Ulrich purchased a 300 acre tract of land north of Orrville. In 1852 Christian was married to Catherine Steiner. They were the parents of thirteen children. In 1856 Christian was ordained to the office of minister. Deacon Peter R. Lehman's notes indicated that those who came from Alsace in 1825 "moved to Chippewa (N.E. part of Wayne Co. and founded a church there." (See *MHB*, April 1963, p. 3.) It must have been in this church, Crown Hill Mennonite Church, that Christian was ordained in 1856 and later, in 1871, as bishop. Eunice Deter wrote of him in her *Descendants of Ulrich Steiner*, "He preached in the German language. He was a very conscientious man and greatly devoted to his master and Lord. It was said of him that he would stay up late into the night studying his Bible."

In 1880 his daughter Barbara and husband David Beugli moved to Oregon. So in 1885 Christian B. and most of his family moved to that state and located on a farm three miles east of Salem, which he had purchased. Eunice Deter is in possession of a collection of letters writ-

ten by Christian B. Steiner to his brother Adam Steiner between the years 1869 and 1902. The first letter from Pratum, Marion County, Oregon, was dated March 30, 1899. It stated, "On Easter Sunday we intend to hold or celebrate communion." His letters from Oregon refer to his neighbors by the names of D. Bögli (Beugli), Stephen Bäbi, Peter Griser, John Uhli Baer, and John Beiers, and Preacher Peter Gerig. In 1900 he writes of "our cemetery" and states that three persons had been buried there. He added "a greeting from Göglis, also from Beer's, also a greeting from Christian Giger's, also from Abraham Blaser's and from the Steiners in Salem."

Christian died at the home of his son Ephriam, at Pratum, Oregon, in June 1903 and was buried in the cemetery the group had started besides their small church building. The date of the organization of the congregation is not known but it must have been before 1900, for as is indicated above by that year there were already three graves in their cemetery, evidently the one established besides the church building. According to information furnished in 1962 by Mabel (Geiger) Conrad, youngest daughter of preacher Christian Giger, after the death of Bishop Steiner, Christian Giger and John Beer ministered to the congregation. In later years after the establishment of the Pratum Emanuel General Conference Mennonite Church some of the members united with them. Others moved to Clackamas County, Oregon. Those moving to Clackamas County held meetings in the homes of their members until the death of John Beer on October 24, 1928. Christian Giger had died January 27, 1913. The Steiner church observed feet washing at communion and the women of the congregation wore black prayer caps. Their church near Pratum was torn down around 1906-07.

## Members of the Mennonite Historical Association in 1962

### Contributing Members (\$5.00)

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Ira J. Buckwalter	H. Harold Hartzler	Roy Roth
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Melvin Gingerich	Noah Sauder	

## Book Review

*Mennonite Country Boy: The Early Years of C. Henry Smith.* By Professor C. Henry Smith, Ph.D. "Preface" by Cornelius Krahn. "Bibliography" by N. P. Springer. Index. Pp. 260. Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kansas, 1962. \$4.00.

Here is a book that will delight both old and young. Dr. Smith's love of learning and his devotion to the cardinal principles of the church of his ancestors become vividly alive in this volume. When he was fifty years old, he decided to write this autobiographical account of his early years for his nephews and nieces and presented fifty copies to these young people and a few close associates and friends. The work has now been published for general distribution.

Few Amish or Mennonites have undertaken a similar task and completed it with such success. His style is familiar, at times almost conversational and of excellent literary quality, entirely lacking in literary "tricks" intended merely to impress the reader. His years of practice in writing and condensing vast quantities of significant historical material as well as his teaching of history and literature had made him a master literary craftsman. He shows in this volume how he, an Amish boy, became interested in history and how his studies led him to become a teacher and writer in the field of Mennonite history, life and culture.

After a brief chapter on his Amish forebears he begins with his early childhood recollections and continues to the time when he received his Ph.D. degree at the University of Chicago. This was also about the time when he met the "beautiful brown-eyed girl," who later became his wife. *Mennonite Country Boy* is outstanding for its vivid presentation of rural life on the Central Illinois frontier in the "horse and buggy" days nearly a century ago.

During the closing decades of the nineteenth century Smith's Amish brethren gradually became known as Amish Mennonites and are now a part of the denomination known officially as "The Mennonite Church." Until Dr. Smith began his extensive research in Amish and Mennonite history none of his students at the Elkhart Institute and later at Goshen College realized that they were having a part in the "great awakening" of these related groups. Under the inspiring leadership of N. E. Byers and C. Henry Smith they came to a true appreciation of their spiritual heritage. Noah Byers, last principal of the Elkhart Institute and first president of Goshen College, had reached this realiza-

tion through his association with John S. Coffman, leading Mennonite evangelist in the new era. C. Henry Smith had learned in some history courses that both Amish and Mennonites were descended from the Anabaptists many of whom had given their lives for insisting on adult baptism and complete separation of church and state. This made Amish and Mennonites the spiritual progenitors of such protestant denominations as the Baptists, Congregationalists, Brethren and Evangelicals.

Writing in the first person, Dr. Smith seems to be chatting familiarly with his reader, recalling with evident relish the scenes and incidents of those happy care-free days, his first simple tasks, his first day in the country school, an adventure with bumblebees, an inspiring young schoolteacher, his high school days. Like some other Amish boys during the closing decades of the last century he was the first of his congregation to attend school beyond the elementary grades. Now follow wholly delightful chapters dealing with school, church and community matters—a complete description of an Amish church service, his uniting with the Partridge congregation, his happy experiences as a rural schoolteacher, his further studies leading to a Ph.D. at the University of Chicago and his final decision to teach Mennonite young people the beauty and the strength of their religious heritage.

After first teaching for a few years in an Indianapolis high school to pay his debts incurred in his study years at Chicago, he returned to Goshen College to bless and inspire Mennonite young people. His style is clear, unaffected, genial and objective. Only when he writes of his transfer to Bluffton College in 1913 does his criticism of the Mennonite Board of Education become sharp and bitter. Oldsters will enjoy Dr. Smith's genial humor. For boys and girls the volume offers a pleasant glimpse into an era when the wide fence rows of the rail fences still left room for songbirds, for groundhogs, and for wild blackberries to delight the country boy.

John Umble

Goshen, Indiana

Peter Klaus Clasen wrote a doctor's dissertation at the Free University of Berlin on a sociological study of the nature of the sects in the sixteenth century with special reference to the Anabaptists in Swabia.

The *Casselman Chronicle*, begun in 1961, is published by the Springs Historical Society of the Casselman Valley, Springs, Pennsylvania. It contains considerable history of the Amish and Mennonite community of this area.

## Mennonite Research News and Notes

MELVIN GINGERICH

The new Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio, was dedicated on April 17, 1963. An attractive dedication booklet of twenty pages was released by the church at that time. It contains a brief history of the congregation, pictures, the dedication services, and other features.

John A. Hostetler's new book *Amish Society* is to be published by the Johns Hopkins Press.

John W. Gingerich, Kalona, Iowa, has compiled and published (1963) *Descendants of Daniel Yoder 1793-1849 and Related Families*. The price of the 94-page book is \$2.50. Daniel Yoder was born in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, the son of Jacob and Frany (Hochstetler) Yoder.

Weyburn Groff, Union Biblical Seminary, Yeotmal, M.P., India, in May completed his dissertation and examinations for the doctor's degree at New York University. His dissertation compared Gandhi's non-violence with Christian nonresistance.

The Broadman Press, Nashville, Tenn., has released W. R. Estep's *The Anabaptist Story*. It has 238 pages and sells for \$4.50.

The Pennsylvania Folklife Society has published Don Yoder's *Pennsylvania Spirituals*. The book has 528 pages. The index contains nineteen references to Mennonites and five to Amish hymns and singing.

The First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ontario, celebrates its 150th anniversary this year. It is preparing a brochure to mark the occasion.

Edward D. Boldt, Department of Sociology, University of Alberta at Calgary, is doing a study on the Hutterites of Alberta.

Elizabeth Reed, M.D., Butler, Ohio, is working on the history of the Roosen (Rosen) family, which was represented in the early German-town Mennonite settlement. She is also interested in the Zimmerman family history.

When European Mennonites after the Mennonite World Conference in Kitchener, Ontario, in August 1962 visited Iowa on their "Land Tour" they were handed booklets entitled "Welcome to Iowa." The booklets contained information concerning Iowa Mennonites as well as pictures. Part of the material was printed in English, German, and French. Copies may be ordered from A. Lloyd Swartzendruber, Kalona, Iowa.

Irvin B. Horst is preparing *A Book of Disciples*, which will contain twelve martyrs stories, told for young people.

# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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JACOB AND BARBARA (KURTZ) UMBLE

Jacob and Barbara (Kurtz) Umble lived and died in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Jacob was 70 years old when he died in 1892. His wife died over eighteen years later, in January 1911. They were members of the Amish Mennonite Church. Mrs. Umble's funeral was held at the Millwood Amish Mennonite Church, which was formed in 1877, when twenty-two families withdrew from the Old Order Amish to form the new organization in the vicinity of Gap, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The pictures above were taken in Lancaster County, likely in 1871, which date appears on the back of the pictures. If this date is correct, the Umbles were probably still members of the Old Order Amish church when those portraits were made. Note the long hair, beard, bow tie, lay down coat collar, and hooks and eyes which Mr. Umble is wearing. Note also Mrs. Umble's cape, apron, and cap with strings. This is another set in the series of pictures which the *Bulletin* is publishing to illustrate the stages in the development of Mennonite costume. Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Umble were the grandparents of John Umble, Goshen, Indiana. M. G.

## An Early Experience With Graded Lesson Materials

JOHN UMBLE

More than forty years ago a few young Sunday school teachers in the Oak Grove Amish Mennonite congregation in western Ohio wished to introduce graded lessons into the primary classes meeting in the basement of the church. They asked permission of the superintendent to use the Standard Series published by the Brethren Publishing Company at Elgin, Illinois.

"Permission?" you ask; "Permission? Why?" Well, you see this happened in those almost forgotten days before our own publishing house at Scottdale was printing our own present fine Sunday school and Vacation Bible School materials.

At that time everyone in the entire school from the tiny toddlers to the old Grandpas in the "Amen Corner" studied the same Uniform Lesson. It made no difference whether

the lessons for a particular quarter were taken from the Epistle to the Ephesians or the Gospel of John or the Book of Chronicles or whether it dealt with the wars of the Jews in the Book of Joshua or Judges.

The teachers of the primary classes did not question the value of those lessons for minds capable of understanding the deep truths contained in them, but they felt it a waste of time and effort to try to bring them to the little people in their classes.

When the teachers found the superintendent and the ministers sympathetic to their request to "try the Standard Graded Lessons," they were ordered, first only for the primary classes. The ministers were not entirely unfamiliar with the graded series. They had heard I. W. Royer, secretary of the Ohio Menn-

nite Sunday School Conference, explain them and advise their introduction.

The introduction of the new lessons met, at first, almost universal approval. Almost, that is, for a few of the older teachers were not quite happy with the new studies and the new methods necessary to interest and instruct the boys and girls. These were gradually "promoted" to teach some of the younger classes upstairs.

But the younger teachers and their classes accepted the new lessons with enthusiasm. Parents noticed a new interest in Bible study and a greater appreciation of Sunday school. Here was material adapted to the child mind presented in a way that helped to create and hold interest and consequently make retention easy and natural.

The other day a middle-aged daddy recalled with pleasure that his father had bought a little coping saw for

(Continued on Page 2)

## GRADED LESSONS

(Continued from Page 1)

him to use in doing his assignments in the graded lesson quarterly. With it he sawed out camels and donkeys and other animals mentioned in the lesson. This was an experience he enjoyed and never forgot.

The use of the lessons, however, brought new problems. How was the teacher to attend to the class roll, take up the collection and look after other similar purely mechanical matters and yet have time to present the lesson properly? And what if she were to be absent? The primary superintendent could not simply go upstairs and ask anyone to teach the Graded Lessons.

Both of these problems were met with considerable success by a system of "assistant" teachers. For this important position the superintendent chose bright, intelligent high school girls acceptable to the teacher of a given class. A few such choices caused a slight lifting of the eyebrows upstairs on account of lack of experience or a supposed lack of consecration as judged by dress or other external matters.

These assistants were to be present at every meeting of the class from beginning to end; in fact, they were a regular part of the downstairs department of the Sunday school. They were to have the lesson prepared so that at a moment's notice they could take charge if the regular teacher was not present.

The assistants took their assignment seriously. They became an appreciated help to the teachers. Many of them later became excellent teachers themselves. Their work and attitude proved that teen-agers enjoy doing Christian work. Such responsibility also helped them to grow spiritually and increased their loyalty to the Mennonite Church and her principles and greatly increased their Bible knowledge.

In those days boys were in one class, girls in another. This system had been "inherited" from the early days when Sunday school was founded more than three quarters of a century before. Just as men sat on one side of the church during the Sunday morning service, and the women on the other, so the Sunday school classes were separated by sexes.

The first two classes—one for boys, one for girls—to use the two years of the Primary Lesson Series continued with the Junior Lessons. Each year the teachers advanced

with their classes. The superintendent thought that this was wise for these teachers understood the Sunday school background of the boys and girls. No other teachers did.

During the last year of the Junior Series the lessons were on the Plan of Salvation and included excellent instruction on baptism and other church ordinances. The teachers felt that their pupils were ready for the period of instruction that always preceded baptism. All the members of both classes applied for church membership.

Some of them may have been too young to understand the full importance of the step they were taking. None of them were yet in their teens. They met several times in the bishop's home for instructions. The ministers were surprised at the Bible knowledge of the group and soon baptized them.

So far as this writer knows all have remained faithful. Some are being used in important positions in the educational and other religious work of the Mennonite Church.

## A Pennypacker Letter

Samuel Whitaker Pennypacker (1843-1916) was a jurist, judge, governor of Pennsylvania (1903-07), president of the Pennsylvania Historical Society (1900-1916), and collector of a large library of Pennsylvania history. In 1883 he wrote *Historical and Biographical Sketches*, which deals with David Rittenhouse, Christopher Dock, and others. He also wrote a book on the Germantown settlement. In the John F. Funk Historical Manuscripts Collection (Mennonite Church Archives, Goshen) are several letters from Pennypacker. Below, one of these is presented. (M. G.)

209 S 6th st  
Phila April 3. 77

Dear Sir

Enclosed I send you my check for \$11.20 for books rec'd—I will take the old Denner book at \$4 paying you the difference of \$1 and upon rec't of it return the one I have to Mr. Frick if you so desire—I have examined the Herald with much pleasure and see that you have had a controversy with my old friend Cassel—I would not like to express the thought so bluntly in print but between ourselves I may say that I have never doubted but that Morgan Edwards deliberately perverted that passage in Menno—Strange to say

the Baptist writers, Benedict Brown and the rest invariably quote Edwards rather than Menno and I can see no reason for their doing so except that it suits them better—You may send me the nine preceding volumes bound like this three years in one and also the volume for 1876—You may also send me the Menno of 1646 at \$5 if it is complete—I can easily have it rebound—Please put it up carefully—

I am not going to prepare a book with a view to its sale—I never expect pecuniary compensation for the expenditure and labor but it is a subject in which I am intensely interested and I find in it delight and relief from the duties of my profession—if I am able to complete my design the gratification of having done so good a work is all the reward I anticipate—I have long been of the opinion that the Quakers had their origin in the Mennonites and recently my views in this respect have received a very remarkable confirmation—A book has recently appeared in England written by a Quaker, Robert Barclay, a descendant I believe of the author of Barlays apology, in which he seems to prove conclusively that not only the Quakers but the Puritans and the Baptists are to be traced to the Holland Mennonites—He thinks that they are the source from which the English learned religious liberty—if he is correct you see the immense importance of the subject historically because the Puritans of New England and the Quakers of Penna are the two pivots on which turn our American civilization—The stone which the builders rejected, our often despised Mennonites, may yet become the corner stone of the temple—The book which is destined to make a great sensation and which would I know very much interest you is very learnedly and ably written and is called "The religious Communities of the Commonwealth." It surprised me very much because I did not know that any one else was investigating the subject.

Very Truly  
Sam'l W Pennypacker

The first annual meeting of the Eastern Mennonite Associated Libraries and Archives was held in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, June 29-30. The program began on Saturday evening and continued through Sunday evening. Mennonites and the Civil War were featured in the program.

## John Witmer, A World War I Conscientious Objector

JAMES WITMER

John M. Witmer was born April 20, 1897, the first child of Daniel C. Witmer and Annie Martin Witmer of Columbiana, Ohio. His father, Daniel, was a progressive farmer for his time and he was also known as one of the few honest horse traders in northeastern Ohio. He was greatly respected for his judgment of horses.<sup>1</sup> Later, Daniel was selected by lot and ordained to the ministry in the White Mennonite Church, about three miles north of Columbiana, Ohio. The ideals which his father supported and upheld provided a very pious home environment for the youthful John.

As a boy, John attended the one room Germantown School only during the winter months when the farm work was slow. Under his instructor, Estella Esterly, he proved to be especially adept at arithmetic and history. His report cards denote excellent work in these subjects. He also found reading a pleasurable pastime and, as he grew older, he spent a great deal of his leisure time in reading. Among many other books, the Bible was his preference.

John was baptized June 3, 1917, and became a member of the White Mennonite Church, upon his confession of faith and his belief in Jesus Christ.

On July 25, 1918, John received a notice from the United States War Department, Local Board for Mahoning County, Ohio, designating him as Order No. 149, Serial No. 296, and entitling him to a place in Class 1-A. By this time he had developed a concept of Jesus Christ as the God of love. To him the Gospel of Christ was a message of peace and good will.

His beliefs and convictions are expressed in a letter sent to a Mr. N. A. May of Youngstown, Ohio. Mr. May was a business friend of the Witmer family. He had sent a card to John explaining that his experience and excellent ability with horses would be of great benefit to him when he was drafted into the armed forces. John's letter of July 1, 1918, was an answer to this card. In his letter John thanked Mr. May for his card, then went on to suggest that Mr. May was not aware of the fact that his being a servant in Christ's kingdom meant that he could not fight. He called attention to John 18:36: "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the

Jews." Matthew 6:15 was also suggested: "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." He went on to explain that the apostles were persecuted and martyred but they did not resort to fighting for revenge.<sup>2</sup>

Early the following month a card came from the Local Board for the War Department dated July 31, 1918, which read, "You are hereby notified that, as a result of your physical examination you have been found by the Local Board qualified for military service which leaves you in Class 1-A, subject to call in your order of call when the Government may have need of your services."<sup>3</sup>

Later a card post-marked August 29, 1918, brought the message, "Kindly be prepared to report for duty between the 3rd and 6th of September. Official notice will follow later."<sup>4</sup>

The official notice which came later requested John to report for service on September 6. This was the beginning of a new experience for the young farmer who had spent almost all his life in his rural home community. Order No. 149, of which John was a member, left Youngstown for Camp Sherman, Chillicothe, Ohio. John and a friend, Harvey Blosser, from Columbiana, were the only two among Order No. 149 who opposed military service for conscientious reasons.<sup>5</sup> Officially the United States Government allowed for freedom of religion and respected individual conscientious beliefs, however, this official stand offered limited protection at the individual and local level. The consideration which the conscientious objectors received depended to a large extent upon the attitude of the particular group to which they were assigned.<sup>6</sup>

Unfortunately, Order No. 149 held little regard for the two young conscientious objectors and in John's first letter home he reports: "The treatment that I get is not always what one would desire but we are looking for a City which hath foundation whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. 11:10).<sup>7</sup>

John and Harvey refused to wear the military uniforms or to carry a

gun. Consequently, their civilian clothes were forcibly removed never to be seen again. This included their wallets containing money as well as other personal possessions. They were forced either to wear military uniforms or nothing at all.

Being arrayed in military uniforms posed another problem. They looked like all the rest of the men, so the soldiers could not easily identify them when they wanted to mock and to sneer at them. To solve this problem, a group of soldiers completely shaved their heads.

John was abused somewhat more than was Harvey because he had been baptized only a short time before he was called by the draft board. He was accused of being baptized only to avoid the military service.<sup>8</sup>

In his next letter home John says: "We never know one minute what will happen next. Remember us in your prayers so we may hold fast the profession of our faith. Hebrews 10: 23."<sup>9</sup>

Several days lapsed until John wrote again. When the letter finally came it began: "I guess you wondered why I did not write more but some of the threats were so horrible that I am glad that you dear folks at home were not near enough to see or hear what was going on."<sup>10</sup>

John and his friend, Harvey, were continually threatened to be shot if they did not drill with the rest of the soldiers. On one occasion they were both lined up together to be shot on the count of three unless they would consent to join the soldiers in drilling. They neither recanted their convictions, nor were they shot.<sup>11</sup>

On another occasion, Harvey was late in leaving the barracks for lunch. Four other soldiers came back to join him. They dragged him upstairs and threatened to drop him head first on a cement platform several feet below. Three of the men held him out the window by his feet and the fourth ordered them to drop him on the count of four. He counted to three, stopped, and blurted out, "I am afraid to count four." The other three replied, "If you are afraid to count four, we are afraid to drop him." They hauled him back in and they all went to dinner.<sup>12</sup>

John's letter continues, "By Monday afternoon it began to go a little

<sup>1</sup> Interview with Edwin Weaver, December 23, 1962.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of September 11, 1918.

<sup>3</sup> Letter of September 15, 1918.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Harvey Blosser, December 23, 1962.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Amos Weaver, December 27, 1962.

<sup>6</sup> Letter of September 9, 1918.

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Harvey Blosser, December 23, 1962.

(Continued on Page 4)

## JOHN WITMER

(Continued from Page 3)

better. Harvey and I were told to get our Bibles which we gladly did. Two boxes were set on end in a public place where we were in sight of hundreds of soldiers and we were ordered to read it without taking our eyes off it for a moment. Our feet did not reach the ground when the box stood on end. Other times they would order us to stand and other times to lay the box down and sit on it. As the soldiers walked past us they would yell such things as 'slackers' and 'yellow'. Another favorite phrase was, 'We are educating them to preach the Kaiser's funeral.'

Several days were spent on the box reading the Bible or following the officer around the training grounds carrying their Bibles.<sup>13</sup>

In closing, John says, "We certainly should continue to pray for peace and deliverance and thank God that we are yet permitted to enjoy religious freedom."<sup>14</sup>

Two days later John wrote again, "There are some officers here who are kind to us. There is a soldier from Lawrence who treats us very nice but most of the soldiers try hard to get us to give up our faith."<sup>15</sup>

The next day John wrote, "I think I will get pretty good treatment now."<sup>16</sup> In the rest of the letter he gave directions on how he wanted his farm managed. He had just begun farming before he was called by the draft board. His operations consisted of ninety acres, a small herd of cattle, and a team of horses.

"I am not feeling very well today," was the report of the letter of September 28.<sup>17</sup>

One evening during the time when John was not feeling well, a group of soldiers gave him a cold shower in the drinking fountain while he was fully clothed. Since his civilian clothes had been taken and not returned, he had only his soaking wet military uniform. The single blanket which had been given to him did not provide sufficient warmth against the ground floor of his bedroom and the frosty autumn night. After this incident John's illness became increasingly more serious.<sup>18</sup>

The third of October John wrote, "I am still very weak from my fever. I can walk around and take care of myself but it goes hard to eat anything . . . This disease is

over the whole camp. They think it is Spanish Influenza."<sup>19</sup>

In the last letter that John wrote, he was in the camp for conscientious objectors. He explains that he had to walk a mile to the CO camp and when he got there his temperature was 103 degrees. He had not been very well after that, although he said that he liked the company much better.<sup>20</sup>

The letter which John's family received October 6 was not in John's handwriting. It read, "Your son is sick in the base hospital. He ask me to write for him. He says he does not suffer much. He thinks the nurses are very kind. He says he invites you to come as soon as you can to visit him and I will add that he is very sick and come if you can."<sup>21</sup>

John's father went to see John immediately. The report which Mrs. Witmer received from her husband said, "John was so very glad to see us but his voice is so low that it is hard to understand him."

John talked in spite of his weak voice. He was especially interested in the church at home and he inquired about the last Sunday's services.<sup>22</sup>

In concluding the letter John's father said, "I don't know when I will come home but it may not be for some time."<sup>23</sup>

John's declaration, "We never know one minute what will happen next," was true.<sup>24</sup> October 8, 1918, John went to that City for which he was looking: "A City which hath foundation whose builder and maker is God." (Hebrews 11:10).<sup>25</sup>

The story of John Witmer remains as a monument to one who stood for Christian principles; to one who stood for what he knew to be truth.

<sup>19</sup> Letter of October 3, 1918.

<sup>20</sup> Letter of October 4, 1918.

<sup>21</sup> Unsigned note of October 6, 1918.

<sup>22</sup> Letter of October 7, 1918, from D. C. Witmer to Mrs. Witmer.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Letter of September 11, 1918.

<sup>25</sup> Letter of September 9, 1918.

#### MENNOMITE RESEARCH NEWS AND NOTES

Broadman Press has published *The Anabaptist Story*, by W. R. Estep.

Frank Peters, Winnipeg, Manitoba, is writing an official Mennonite Brethren history to be used as a college text book in the schools of this denomination.

Peter Klassen, Fresno, California, has been assigned the project by the Mennonite Brethren Board of Reference and Counsel of studying the use of the word "Mennonite" by mission stations to learn what effect the term has in the outreach program of the church.

<sup>13</sup> Letter of September 15, 1918.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Letter of September 16, 1918.

<sup>16</sup> Letter of September 17, 1918.

<sup>17</sup> Letter of September 28, 1918.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Harvey Blosser, December 23, 1962.

#### David Plank (1833-1912)

JOHN UMBLE

David Plank, bishop of the two Amish Mennonite congregations in the southern part of Logan county, Ohio, was born in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, on May 15, 1833, the second in a family of nine children. His parents, Samuel and Juliana (Hertzler) Plank, were born of Amish parents in Mifflin County. In search of cheaper land, the Samuel Plank family moved to the pioneer Amish settlement in Union Township, Logan County, Ohio, in 1844. Here David grew to manhood and was baptized a member of the Amish congregation. He attended school in Mifflin and Logan counties, but was largely self-educated. On February 14, 1856, he was married to Mary Hertzler, a fifth generation descendant of the pioneer, Jacob Hertzler.

David Plank operated a small farm, was a skilled carpenter and cabinet maker and always took excellent care of his poultry and live stock, but seemed indifferent to making money beyond what was necessary to provide a modest living for his family. In stature he was short, about five foot six, and in his later years decidedly heavy set. He took a keen interest in community life and affairs and served as township clerk, an elective political office, until his ordination to the ministry in 1859; then he resigned. After a rather hesitant beginning he assumed his duties as a preacher in great humility. Throughout his ministry his delivery was calm and deliberate with no attempt at the highly emotional half-chant then in vogue among some of his contemporaries.

When the division in the Logan county congregation occurred in 1862-63, he sided with the group which later built the Walnut Grove church and worshipped on alternate Sundays with the Champaign County congregation under the bishop oversight of Bishop John Warye. Plank took little interest in the Amish Mennonite Conference and seldom attended its annual meetings. His sensitive spirit suffered greatly as a result of the division in 1862-63 and again in 1880 when a division in his and Warye's congregations lost to them most of their active Sunday school workers.

In 1895 it was decided to place the leading minister of each of the two Logan county congregations in the lot for bishop and to ordain whichever one was chosen, as bishop for both congregations. The lot fell on David Plank and he was ordained, probably by John Warye or

(Continued on Page 7)

## The Chester Mennonite Church in Wayne County, Ohio

WILMER D. SWOPE

The Chester Mennonite Church is a member of the Ohio and Indiana Conference of the Old Order (Wisler) Mennonite Church. Before 1872 the congregation was a member of the Ohio Mennonite Conference.

### Settlers

John Funk (1788-1862), a Mennonite minister from East Huntingdon Township, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, settled in section 22 of Chester Township, Wayne County, Ohio in 1827.<sup>1</sup> John Shaum of Northampton County, Pennsylvania, in the company of two men went on foot to see the west, then north to Canada and back home, having walked 1,000 miles. On Nov. 7, 1829, Shaum bought 160 acres in section 21 of Chester Township from the State of Ohio for \$2.00 an acre. Shaum was a brother-in-law of minister John Barkey (1781-1860), of Kolbs Church in Holmes County, Ohio.<sup>2</sup> Christian Holdeman, a brother-in-law of John Shaum from Bucks or Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, settled in Fairfield Township, Columbiana County, Ohio in 1825. Two years later in 1827 he moved to Chester Township. His son Amos married Nancy Yoder, daughter of the pioneer John Yoder who with his cousin Bishop Jacob Nold settled in Columbiana County in 1817. In 1837 Jacob Troxell, a relative of John Funk, moved to Chester Township from Canton Township, Stark County, Ohio. In 1842 David Martin of Orrville purchased a farm for his son John<sup>3</sup> in Chester Township. Of interest is the fact that Bishop Peter Imhoff (1806-1893) of nearby Brubakers and Pleasant Ridge Mennonite churches in Ashland County moved to Chester following the death of his wife; his children and their families accompanied him.

### Church Organization

Minister John Funk soon after his arrival built a Mennonite meeting house on his farm in which he preached for the Mennonite settlers. Funk was accused of preaching too much like a Methodist. The object-

ing group withdrew in 1829. This group called Bishop Jacob Nold of Columbiana County, Ohio, to organize a church and ordain leaders.<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly in 1830 John Shaum was called to the ministry. The first deacon was Amos Holdeman. In 1840 a log church was erected in Section 16 of Chester Township, one mile west of Funks Church. On April 1, 1850, Samuel Holdeman deeded one acre to trustees of the Mennonite Church. They were Benjamin Gable, George Shaum, and Amos Holdeman. The deed designates the Mennonite Church in two specific terms, four times as (Old Regular Mennonite Church) and twice as (Regular Mennonite Church). This was done to prevent any claim to the church property by groups with liberal or new ideals. One report says that the objecting members of Funk's group could not get the church which Funk had built, because he had built it on his own land.<sup>5</sup>

In 1840 Peter Troxell was ordained to the ministry. In 1844 the Mennonites of Ohio held a church conference in the Chester Church, reaffirming the practices of the church in several areas.<sup>6</sup>

It seems that Bishop Abraham Rohrer of Medina County, Ohio, who was ordained bishop in 1836, had bishop oversight of the Chester church from 1836 until 1864 when John Shaum was ordained bishop.

### Holdeman Schism

John Holdeman, the son of deacon Amos Holdeman, had a religious experience at the age of 12 in 1844. This was doubtless the result of contact with the Methodist or evangelistic preaching of John Funk. In October 1853 Holdeman joined the Mennonite Church and was baptized by Bishop Abraham Rohrer. On the day of his baptism he confided to Bishop Rohrer that he had a strong conviction that someday he would be a minister of the Gospel. Dissatisfied with the practice and position of the church and the absence of a call to the ministry in the church, he invited persons including his father to a meeting in his own home. These meetings were continued irregularly for some time. Not satisfied with the church, but not willing to with-

<sup>1</sup> See *Mennonite Historical Bulletin*, Vol. XXIV, No. 1, Jan. 1963.

<sup>2</sup> Shaum Holdeman Family History — Rupp.

<sup>3</sup> Martin and Magdalina Bechtel Funk, probably from Bucks Co., Pennsylvania, settled in Bedford County, Pennsylvania. In 1811 they settled in Canton Township, Stark County, Ohio. Their daughter Elizabeth was married to Jacob Troxel. In 1837 the Jacob Troxells moved to Chester Township, Wayne County. Their son was Peter Troxel, the minister.

<sup>4</sup> Jacob Nold was the only Ohio Mennonite bishop known to have served the churches in Ashland, Medina, Stark and Wayne counties, before 1834.

<sup>5</sup> Wayne County, Ohio, Deed Records, Vol. 33, page 528.

<sup>6</sup> *Mennonite Historical Bulletin*, Vol. XI, No. 4, October 1950.

draw he and his father visited the Stauffer and Herrite Mennonites in Pennsylvania. This visit proved disappointing, whereupon he and his group withdrew in 1858 and organized what Holdeman called The Church of God in Christ Mennonite. The inspiration for the name came from John Funk's group.<sup>7</sup> The Holdeman group worshipped in private homes for awhile but in 1878 erected a brick meeting house. John Holdeman was the first minister. His brother-in-law Frank Seidner was also ordained to the ministry. After the death of Holdeman's mother Nancy in 1882, the greater part of the Holdeman group moved to Missouri and Kansas. It is said that Nancy Holdeman did not withdraw her membership from the Chester Church, and that she remarked, "He (John) will not take my church away from me." Because of the Holdeman division, Minister John Shaum was mentally afflicted for awhile.

### 1860-1907

In 1860 George Shaum was ordained deacon to fill the vacancy left when Amos Holdeman withdrew in 1858. John Shaum was ordained bishop in 1864, and Peter Y. Landis minister in 1870. In 1872 the church bought land from William Hagerman for erection of buggy sheds. In 1873 George Shaum as carpenter and contractor tore down the old log church, using some of the logs in the construction of the sheds, and also erected the new church. The church bought land for a new township house and built the foundation wall in return for the old Eight Square school and township house which was located between the cemetery and buggy sheds.<sup>8</sup>

Because of the Funk and Holdeman attempts at introducing new things to the Mennonites of Chester Township, a very strong desire was cultivated in this church to maintain and preserve the old accepted worship and polity practices of the Mennonite Church. These events likely helped to influence bishop Abraham Rohrer in defence of the old ways. These events at Chester in addition to what was thought of as the growing worldliness of the General Conference congregation and College at Wadsworth influenced the mind and purpose of Bishop Rohrer when bishop Jacob Wisler led a conservative schism from the Mennonite Church in Ohio and Indiana in 1872.

The entire Chester Church led by Bishop John Shaum and the greater part of the church in Medina County

<sup>7</sup> *Mennonite Historical Bulletin*, Vol. XXIV, No. 1, Jan. 1963.

<sup>8</sup> Shaum Holdeman Family History, Rupp.

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## The Oak Grove Mennonite Church

MRS. CLETUS KURTZ AND MRS. DAVID SOMMER

1962 is the year that marks the 100th anniversary of the building of the Oak Grove Church house in Wayne County, Ohio. It is difficult for the present generation to realize their forefathers were Amish, and until 1862, services were held in the home of members — the same as neighboring Amish communities. In 1817, John Zook of Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, was the first Amish to settle in this area. By 1852, the settlement had grown so large they met for worship in two separate groups.

Due to this growth and need for a central meeting place, in the Spring of 1862, members met at Center Schoolhouse and plans were made to erect the first meeting house. The building committee was David Smoker, Jonathan W. Zook and Samuel Schrock, plus three assistants. Funds were raised by subscription, consisting of 108 names, and contributions ranged from \$2.00 to \$30.00. This building was located east of the present church house in the northwest corner of the present cemetery. The northeast corner was where the grave of Samuel Plank is located (father of the late Frank Plank). In spite of major difficulties and misunderstandings, the congregation (oldest in Ohio) was pleased with its new Meeting House which became known as Oak Grove Amish Church. Built with native lumber from the Samuel Schrock farm, and by members donating labor, the cost of the building was \$1415.87 including the land and right of spring. Plan of building had an audience room 43' x 55' with two anterooms attached—one for women to care for infants and the other a council room for the ministers. Two wood burning stoves, located in the center on each side, furnished the heat. A thoughtful addition on the south side of the building was a wooden platform where buggies could be loaded and unloaded with a minimum of effort. This platform, also, was used by the young to scamper. Sheds were provided for the horses. The first services were held October 1862. John K. Yoder was the bishop. While known for his strict adherence to the Amish faith, Yoder was able to visualize the needs of the future for the progress of the church and the church moved forward. His leadership and influence was sought by other congregations all over the state. He was the father of C. Z. Yoder and D. Z. Yoder, later ordained into the ministry.

Services were held every two weeks, a custom followed prior to the building of the church. After

the erection of Pleasant Hill Church in 1881, services were held every other Sunday. Caretaker service and maintenance costs were very small. There were no utility bills and ministers were not salaried.

As the sermons were all in German, it no longer met the needs of the children and young people, German was becoming a forgotten language. Some of the older people could read and write it as they had enrolled in German classes conducted at Center Schoolhouse. Several attended Sunday school at Paradise Union Church and Georgetown School and saw the need of a Sunday school. There was a lot of controversy about having a Sunday school. On April 30, 1871, by the consent of the Church, a school was organized with Samuel Plank, David Smucker and C. D. Yoder as superintendents. From then on, we became known as Amish Mennonites. Since no one had experience in this work and none of the present day materials to draw from, it was necessary to develop a program. Song books with notes were not available. Since services were in German, Sunday school followed the same pattern. This proved a problem as it was necessary to teach the grown young people the German alphabet before they could read the Bible. Later, the alphabet was taught to the Primary Department. In 1881, Pleasant Hill was built to accommodate those who had a great distance to come to Oak Grove. Sunday school was organized there in 1883. C. Z. Yoder was an able leader of the school and enjoyed fine co-operation from the young people. At first, school was held at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday during the summer months. A program was given in October to end the year. At this time, it was the custom to present prizes for attendance and committing to memory scripture verses. In 1885, it was organized with the church service and changed to the hour of 9:30 a.m. The school grew and methods improved and by 1892, it was held the year round at both churches. In 1910, services were conducted in English and Oak Grove held Sunday school and Church services every Sunday and Pleasant Hill alternate Sundays. In 1890, Young Peoples Meeting became a part of the regular service and one of the reasons for the interest was that it was the only service conducted in English. These were evening services and the first time any evening services had been held. There had been no lights before this time.

The young people had attended Sunday evening singing at various other churches and because of the interest, the church felt it should open the door for these services. Average church attendance in 1890 was 290.

Family names common in the early church were Yoder, Wenger, Zook, Speicher, Ramseyer, Schrock, Burkholder, Rich, King, Byler, Conrad, Plank, Kurtz, Smucker, Lantz, Meyer, Berkey, Musser, Hartzler, Ziegler, Liechty, Gruber, Brandt, Blough, Miller and Greaser. Pleasant Hill and Oak Grove lent strong support to missionary work. The first collection for mission work was at Oak Grove and it amounted to \$15.31. The Church has sent people to the foreign field, namely: Lina Ressler, Crissie Shenk and Lydia Lehman. Anna V. Yoder and Ella Smucker to the Canton Mission which was supported by both churches in 1905 and continued until the Mission became self-supporting.

In 1905, our present church was erected. The building committee was Jonas Smucker, John Leighty, and John Spiker. Joe Kropf, contractor, was a very capable man who had much foresight so that the church is lasting in style and structure. The cost was \$6500.00. Various changes and modernization programs have taken place over the years. Benjamin Gerig was bishop at this time. Every winter, a week or ten days of Bible Conference was held with two visiting ministers conducting the services in the forenoon and evening. Among ministers who conducted these services were D. D. Miller, D. J. Johns, J. S. Shoemaker, Eli Frey, S. E. Allgyer and Ira Buckwalter. Every year revival meetings were held for two weeks and frequent speakers for these meetings were S. G. Shetler, J. E. Hartzler and M. S. Steiner. With the Sunday school program, support of higher education and less conservative ideas, in 1930 we changed to the name Oak Grove Mennonite Church.

WSMA had its beginning soon after the church was built and was held in the homes. Some of the leaders were Mrs. C. Z. Yoder, Mrs. M. P. Yoder, Mrs. Jonathan Schrock, Mrs. Jacob Yoder, Mrs. J. S. Gerig. Later the meeting was moved to the basement of the church and then again to the Fellowship Center.

Because of a desire to have a building to serve the social needs of the congregation, Oak Grove members erected the Fellowship Center in 1947. Jesse Smucker, a former minister from our congregation, gave the dedication sermon.

During our 100 years our congregation has been served by three  
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**OAK GROVE**

(Continued from Page 6)

bishops—John K. Yoder, Benjamin Gerig, and J. S. Gerig. Ministers were John Smiley, Isaac Miller, C. Z. Yoder, D. Z. Yoder, P. R. Lantz, Jesse Smucker, William Detweiler, Virgil Gerig, and Robert Otto. Deacons were Peter Conrad, Albert Hartzler, and Peter Baumgartner. Members who were ordained were I. W. Royer, Forest Musser, Elmer Hostetler, Richard Miller, and Paul Conrad.

Many of our young people serve MCC, I-W, Voluntary Service, Relief and Peace Programs the world over in the name of Christ. Our present church has a missionary, Marian Hostetler, in Algeria. We, of the present congregation of Oak Grove Mennonite Church, can be thankful for our Godly heritages, for their sacrifices and foresight in looking ahead and making it possible that we can have our present church home to enjoy and in which to serve in His name through the Sunday school, Church, Young Peoples Meeting, WMSA, MYF, and working through MCC, our Peace Witness and spirit of mission. May our gratitude keep these beacons burning brightly for generations to come.

**DAVID PLANK**

(Continued from Page 4)

Jonas Yoder. By his tact and gentleness he succeeded in welding together the two long separated groups which are now the strong South Union congregation.

David Plank's outstanding contribution to the life and work of the Mennonite church was the organization, with the consent of his bishop and the Logan county congregation, of the first permanent Sunday school ever organized and conducted in an Amish or "Old" Mennonite house of worship. For a number of years he served as both superintendent and teacher in the Logan and Champaign Amish Sunday schools. Both in writing and speaking he was precise and exact in the use of language. One of his major delights was to drive to Champaign county on a Saturday afternoon to visit some of his wife's relatives or Bishop John Warye, talk far into the night, then attend services on Sunday morning and Sunday school in the afternoon.

He died at his home in Union township on October 4, 1912, and was buried in the Alexander cemetery.

Barbara Coffman, Vineland, Ontario, has completed her manuscript on the biography of her grandfather, John S. Coffman.

**Mennonite Research News and Notes**

MELVIN GINGERICH

Frank H. Epp, Altona, Manitoba, is continuing his work on his Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Minnesota. His topic is "An Analysis of National Socialism in the Mennonite Press in the 1930's."

James E. Landing is working on Amish communities for a Ph.D. in geography at Pennsylvania State University.

Jake Peters, a student at the Goshen College Biblical Seminary, is doing a study of the curriculum of the Steinbach Bible Institute.

Peter Brock, a professor at Columbia University, spent approximately two months at the Goshen College Historical Library working on the history of pacifism in America prior to 1914.

Abraham Friesen of Winnipeg, Manitoba, is pursuing the subject of Erasmus and the Anabaptists for a thesis in history at Stanford University.

J. A. Toews, Winnipeg, Manitoba, spent parts of August and September in the Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen, Indiana, doing research on his Ph.D. dissertation which will be on Sebastian Franck and the Anabaptists. He is enrolled in the graduate school of the University of Minnesota.

The sesquicentennial celebration of the publication of the Goeb Bible at Somerset, Pennsylvania, is being held at that place on Sept. 29-Oct. 4, 1963. This Bible is notable as the first Bible printed west of the Alleghenies. It was a German Bible, the successor to the Sauer Bible published at Germantown and to the Jungmann Bible published at Reading. The Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen, Indiana, has two copies of this Bible in its collection. An extensive program of unique and significant displays is planned, including a press such as Goeb used and a selection of rare Bibles. A brochure has been printed showing pictures of the Goeb Bible's title-page, his tombstone, and site of the printing office plus articles on the biography of the man and on the typography and paper of the book along with a census of known copies. Gerald Studer, member of the Mennonite Historical and Research Committee, has written the biography of Friederich Goeb, the Lutheran printer and publisher of this Bible in 1813.

The Clarence Center Mennonite Church issued a "40th Anniversary Program" booklet of sixteen pages for its anniversary on July 14, 1963. It contains a list of charter mem-

bers, pictures of the early members, a historical survey of the church, an article on the former Good congregation, as well as a picture of this church taken in approximately 1900, and other pictures and information. Copies of the booklet can be ordered for fifty cents from D. Edward Dierer, 5200 Bank Street, Clarence, New York.

A. J. Klassen, Clearbrook, British Columbia, recently spent a month at the Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen, Indiana, working on the final editing of the "Mennonite Bibliography. 1630 to the Present." It is a chronological list of writings by and about Mennonites in all countries. Approximately 24,000 separate items have thus far been listed.

**CHESTER CHURCH**

(Continued from Page 5)

led by Bishop Abraham Rohrer withdrew from the Ohio Mennonite Conference and followed bishop Jacob Wisler.

In 1882 bishop John Shaum died. Peter Imhoff was ordained minister in 1884. In 1892 Michael Shaum was ordained deacon to assist his brother George who died in 1893. Minister Peter Y. Landis died in 1897. Daniel Martin was ordained minister in 1898.

**Martin Schism of 1907**

In 1907 the leaders of the Chester church, Martin, Imhoff, and Shaum, and 2/3 of the membership followed John W. Martin of Indiana into his Old Order group.<sup>9</sup> The remaining third of the membership were served once a month by the ministers from the County Line church near Orrville, Ohio, until 1916 when Minister David Wenger of Orrville moved to Chester. Both groups share the use of the meeting house. In 1939 minister Daniel Martin left the Martin group and joined the Chester Wisler church. Martin died in 1945. In 1944 Carl Good was ordained minister and bishop in 1952. Amos Martin was ordained deacon in 1934. Harvey Weaver was ordained minister July 17, 1962. Frank Imhoff was a minister for several years. This congregation is unique in that on four occasions the church has been called upon to choose between conservative and liberal positions. In the Holdeman, Wisler, and Martin divisions the larger part of the congregation has allied itself with the more conservative position.

<sup>9</sup> The Mennonite Quarterly Review, Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, July 1959. See article by J. C. Wenger on 1872 Schism, and Martin Division, pages 215 to 240. According to a reliable source about half of the membership at the Pleasant View church in Mahoning County followed John Martin into his Old Order group.

## Book Review

*Pennsylvania Spirituals.* By Don Yoder, Ph.D., now of the University of Pennsylvania. Lancaster, Pa.: Pennsylvania Folklife Society. 1961. Copious footnotes, valuable appendices, maps, two bibliographies, and two indexes. Pp. 528. \$7.50.

Why folklorists had for so long overlooked the Pennsylvania Dutch spiritual seems to be an unanswered question. The late George Pullen Jackson had called attention to them ten or fifteen years ago and insisted that some one should investigate this promising field. This task Dr. Yoder has now completed in a highly satisfactory manner.

He finds that the Pennsylvania spiritual originated in the "bush-meetings" held in the southeastern area of Pennsylvania and contiguous sections of Maryland and Delaware whither, under the influence of William Penn, many South Germans had come to enjoy, at his invitation, complete religious liberty.

But when "shouting Methodism" disturbed the quiet of Lutherans, Mennonites, and Reformed congregations, they were criticized bitterly by the old, more formal churches. Many people were swept into the new movement. One historian states that at a time when there were "twenty rowdy dances to one church service on the frontier" the revival movement saved the frontier from paganism.

But after the "Great Awakening" during the late eighteenth century and the early years of the nineteenth, many of the Methodist congregations had become rich and prosperous. Now they in turn were ready to give up much of their original fervor. To save the vast and ever receding frontier, a "Second Awakening" took place.

This period extending from before the Civil War to several decades later saw the rise of a number of smaller denominations; the Church of God, the Evangelical Association, Mennonite Brethren in Christ and United Brethren, to mention only a few. To encourage non-members to attend, the revivalists held their meetings in some wooded spot, in "bush-meetings," from the Pennsylvania Dutch word for "woods", that is, Boosch.

The older denominations criticized the meetings severely, first for what they called their emotional excesses, shouting and jumping, and for the "vain repetitions" by which they meant the choruses. In his opening chapter, "The Spiritual Tradition in America," Dr. Yoder tells the fascinating story of the discovery of this type of revival meeting song.

In chapters two and three he describes "bush-meeting religion" and presents a sociological analysis. In the next two chapters he discusses somewhat more in detail the spiritual tradition in Pennsylvania and points out a few spots where it is still alive.

He has collected a vast amount of data showing that the use of High German had largely died out even in pre-Civil War days. This left only a diluted Palatinate-German dialect (Pennsylvania Dutch) to be used in the songs and worship services of the large German-speaking population.

the person or persons who sang it for him and an English translation of the verse and chorus. More than a dozen persons assisted him by singing them as they remembered hearing them in the "bush meetings" years ago and more recently in the "camp-meetings." In the remaining chapters, VII to X, Dr. Yoder presents much new, interesting material on "sources of the spirituals," the "diffusion of the tradition," "Pennsylvania spirituals in print," and "the themes of the Spirituals." All in all it is a worthy piece of research, a volume to which one returns again and again.

PENNSYLVANIA SPIRITUALS

NO. 133. VEER DREFFEN OONS VEEDER DART ON

CHORUS

Fine VERSE

The accompanying Pennsylvania Dutch spiritual is taken from Dr. Yoder's Chapter VI in which he records 150 of the spirituals as they were sung for him by octogenarian relatives and friends in various sections of southeastern Pennsylvania.

If German readers are confused by the attempt to spell Pennsylvania Dutch in the illustration, they will recognize the following:

"Wir treffen uns wieder dort an . . .  
Wir gehen bald heim zu Glory  
Und treffen uns wieder dort an . . ."

Translation:

"We'll meet each other there again . . .

We'll soon be going home to Glory And . . ."

"Oh, brethren, are you happy?  
Is Jesus in your soul?  
Yes, God be thanked, we're happy!  
It's Jesus in our soul!"

Following each spiritual Dr. Yoder gives details of his experience in it, the place and date, the name of

It will prove of abiding interest, not only to the folklorist and the historian, but also to the student and to the average person interested in the development of America's receding frontier and in its complex religious history.

The volume is well-documented. The copious footnotes, valuable appendices, maps of the bush-meeting country, two bibliographies and two indexes add to the usefulness and value of Dr. Yoder's book.

John Umble  
Goshen, Indiana.

The Mennonite Deacon, Michael Bixler (1805-1879) of the Mennonite Church in Mercer County, Pennsylvania, moved to Mahoning County, Ohio; from here he moved with his son-in-law Stephen Berkey of Medina County, Ohio, to Dickson County, Tennessee, where he died and is buried. His wife Susannah Silvies Bixler (1815-1901) is buried at the Midway Mennonite Church in Mahoning County, Ohio. W.D.S.